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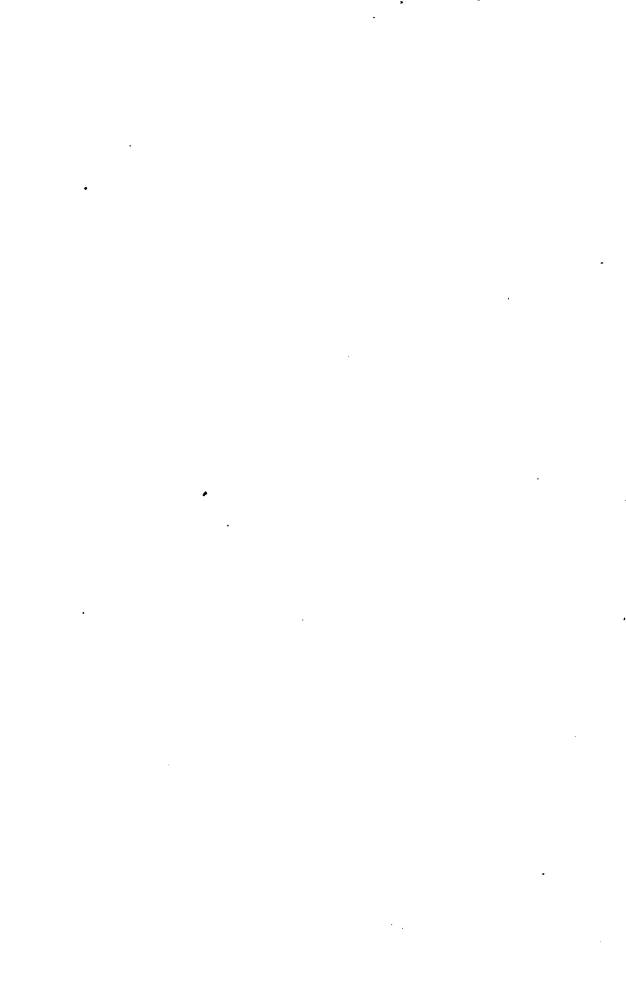
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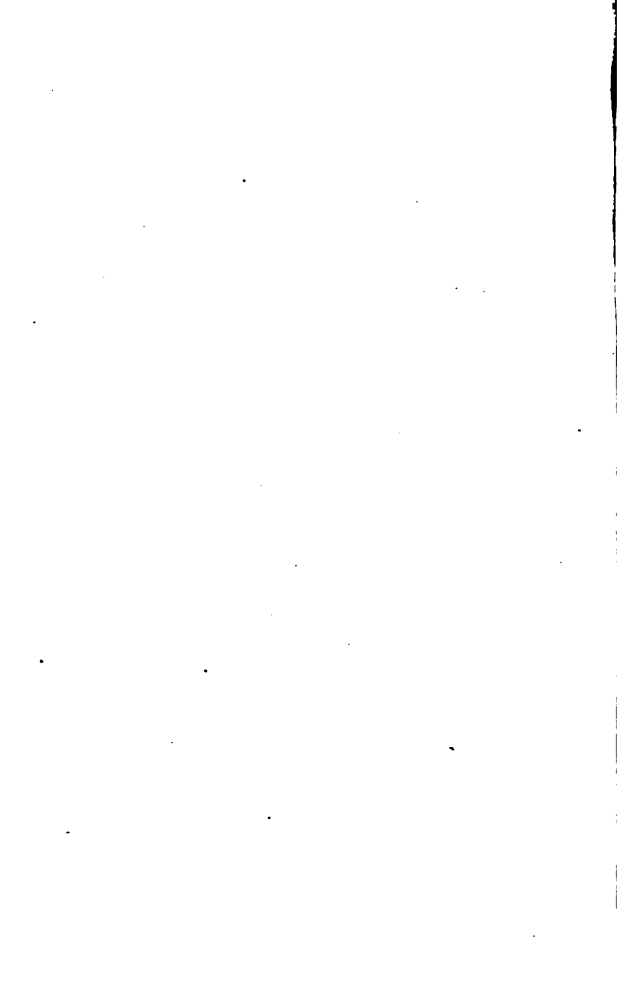
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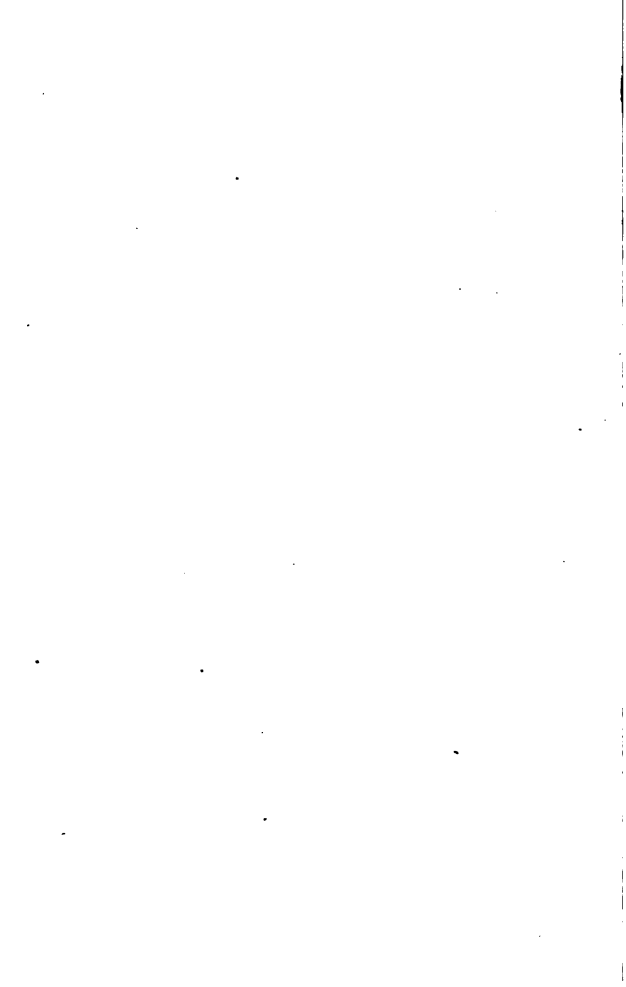
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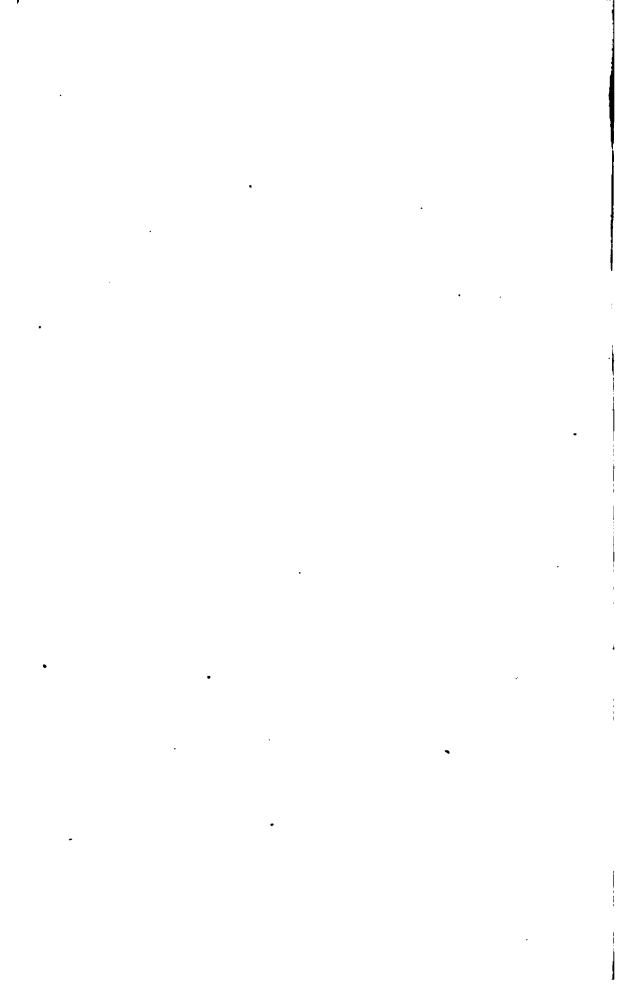


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ELEGANT EXTRACTS

FROM THE MOST EMINENT
PROSE WRITERS.

PART I.

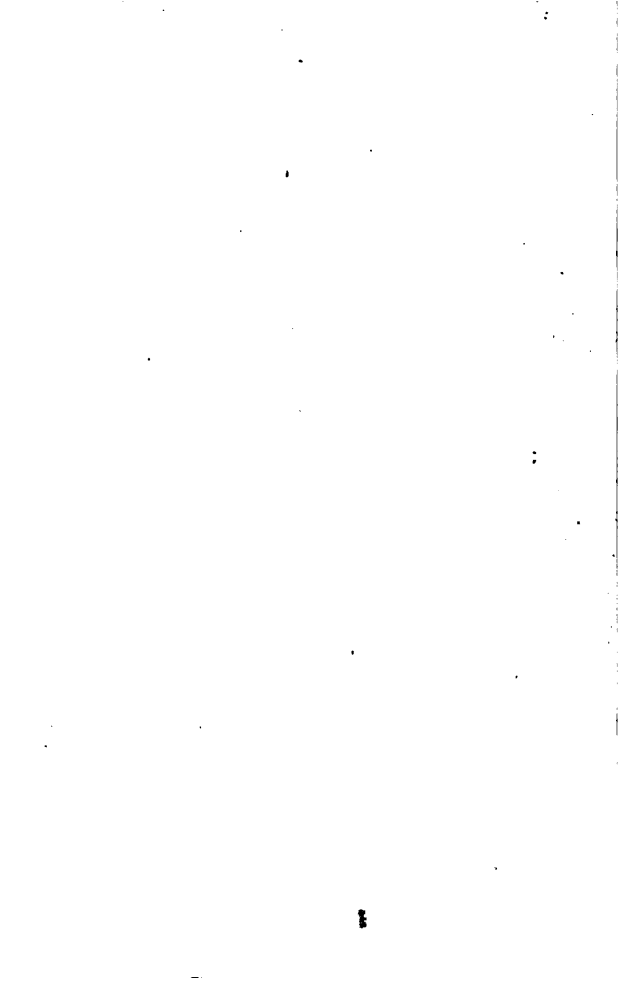
RELIGIOUS, MORAL, AND PRECEPTIVE.



Let lightnings dart their livid fires. p. 13.

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1827.



NEW ELEGANT EXTRACTS.

A

UNIQUE SELECTION,

MORAL, INSTRUCTIVE, AND ENTERTAINING,

FROM THE MOST EMINENT

Prose and Epistolary Writers.

BY

R. A. DAVENPORT, ESQ.

EDITOR OF WHITTINGHAM'S EDITION OF THE BRITISH POETS.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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ELEGANT EXTRACTS.

PART I.

Religious, Moral, and Preceptive.

ON THE GOODNESS OF THE DEITY.

OUR great Lord and Master has taught us, that “there is none good but one, that is God:” by which expression we may understand, that there is none so perfectly disinterested, so diffusively and so astonishingly good, as God is. For, in another place, he instructs us both how to comprehend, and rely on, this unchangeable and never-failing attribute of the divine nature; resembling it to, or representing it by, a human quality or virtue, namely, the affection and tender regard of parents to their children. “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him!” From whence it is obvious to remark, that as the humane and generous man has a peculiar tenderness for his more immediate descendants, and, proportionally to his power and influ-

ence, is willing and active to succour and relieve the indigent, to divide care, lessen misery, and diffuse happiness through the world; inconceivably more affectionate is the eternal Parent unto, and regardful of, all his intelligent creatures; truly disposed, according to their rank of existence, to promote their welfare; and beyond comprehension inclined to conduct them, through the greatest variety of circumstances, to the noblest perfection, and the highest degree of felicity. In his righteous and benevolent nature there cannot possibly be the most distant tendency to caprice, severity, or selfishness; for the multitude of sharers, he knows, can never subtract from his inexhaustible fulness. He created to communicate. In every evil which he prevents, he is pleased; and in all the good that he bestows, he glories. His goodness dictated the bestowing of existence, in all its forms and with all its properties. His goodness displays itself in sustaining and disposing of all things. His goodness connects unnumbered worlds together, in one spacious, vast, and unbounded universe, and embraces every system. "His tender mercies are over all his works."

Without goodness, what apprehensions could we entertain of all the other attributes of the Divine Being? Without the utmost extent of benevolence and mercy, they would hardly be perfections or excellences. And what would a universal administration produce, in the hands of an evil, or a partial, or malevolent direction, but scenes of horror and devastation? Not affliction and punishment for the sake of discipline and

correction, to prevent the offence or reform the sinner ; but heavy judgments and dreadful vengeance, to destroy him ; or implacable wrath and fiery indignation, to prolong his misery, and extend the duration of his torture through the revolving periods of an endless eternity.

Without the most enlarged notions of an infinite and everlasting goodness in the divine nature, an impenetrable gloom must hang over every mind, and darkness overspread the whole face of being. Neither could any other conceivable sentiment disperse our suspicions, or banish one of our guilty or superstitious fears : for suppose he confined his goodness to a few, without any reasonable cause or just ground, and we could be so whimsically partial to ourselves as to conceit that we were of this select number ; yet there could be no security of happiness, not even to this little flock. He that chose them by chance, might as accidentally abandon them ; and, as the former was without reason or goodness, the latter might be without righteousness or mercy. Therefore it is infinitely desirable to think, and we are confident of the truth of our idea, that “ the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.”

For if he be self-existent, omnipotent, and possessed of perfect liberty ; if it be impossible for him ever to err, or mistake, in what is good and fitting ; and if he enjoys an infinite ability to effect, with a thought only, what shall always be for the greatest advantage, he must be originally and essentially, immutably, and for ever good.

Holy Scripture, as if beauty and goodness were synonymous terms or inseparable qualities, thus

describes him: "How great is thy goodness! And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." And as if glory and goodness signified the same thing, you find, *Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19*, "And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory." To which the answer is, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." And when, as it is written in the next chapter, the Lord descended, and proclaimed his name, or published the attributes in which he is peculiarly delighted, what is this distinguishing name, or what these divine and glorious attributes? "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." The apostle sums up all these in one word, when he saith, "God is love." Which leads me to the second thing proposed,

Namely, to illustrate the extensive signification and import of this subject by some remarkable instances, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

No bounds can be fixed to the divine presence, nor is any part of illimitable space without his inspection and active influence. There is nothing remote or obscure to him, nor any exceptions to his favour among all the works of his hands. Far and wide, then, as is the vast range of existence, so is the divine benevolence extended; and both in the previous trial and final retribution of all his rational and moral productions, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

In the first place, to illustrate this, we need.

only to take a transient view of the outworks of the visible creation, a general survey of the nature and correspondence of the various parts of this regular and grand machine; this finished and stupendous fabric, in which every thing is contrived and concluded for the best.

For do but imagine an appetite or faculty altered, or a change in the object prepared to gratify it, in any respect. Suppose a material alteration, or considerable difference in nature, and we shall easily perceive it would be a manifold disadvantage, either to individuals or to the whole. Suppose the earth otherwise than it is, or the atmosphere and surrounding air to be varied, and in any degree more rarefied or more condensed: suppose the element of water greatly increased or considerably diminished; or the sun's blazing orb fixed nearer, and its vertical beams, therefore, stronger; or suppose it more remote, and its heat sensibly abated, the alteration would be a misfortune, if the difference did not terminate in misery and destruction: so that from the present adjustment, proportion, and accommodation of all matters in the wide creation, the consequence is fairly drawn, and very evident, that "God is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

This is certain of the *whole* of God's works, and is peculiarly apparent in *man*, the principal inhabitant of this earth; for, as his welfare, dignity, and satisfaction, nay, his happiness, and even the end of his being, depend on, and arise from his regularity and constancy in virtue, what an infinite concern hath the Deity expressed about it!

What, that can consist with liberty, hath been omitted by supreme wisdom in this most important affair? To incline him to be moderate in all his gratifications, true pleasure proceeds from nothing else. To keep off intemperate indulgence, and to guard him against all voluptuous excesses, it is so ordained, that extravagance and inconvenience are near together; and that vice and pain are, though not immediate and inseparable associates, never far asunder; and that it is impossible for that soul to be calm and at ease which iniquity has stained, and which impenitent guilt corrodes.

The parts of man's body are wonderfully designed and curiously constructed; regularly disposed of, and most accurately proportioned for the safety and advantage of the whole. As apt as we may be to quarrel with our nature, suppose an instinct was struck out of our frame, or a single passion taken from us; suppose our senses any ways altered, by being either strengthened or impaired; or even reason refined and abstracted to such a degree as to render us wholly negligent of food and raiment, necessary exercises, and secular concerns; in any of these instances, the imaginary emendation would be a real deficiency, and a proportionable deduction from the moment and quantity of our happiness.

It is evidently the same with respect to all the other creatures we are acquainted with: their nature and condition, their qualities and circumstances, are so adapted to one another, that, as the intellectual powers of a being of a more exalted nature would not, probably, suit an in-

habitant of this lower world, so neither would the capacities of human nature guide the fowls of the air, or conduct the beasts of the field, to so much happiness as they find by following the motions and impulses of sense and instinct: and if reflection, enlarged ideas, and moral discrimination be denied them, it is plainly, because they would be a burden and a misfortune, rather than a benefit to them.

But these universal notices and undeniable testimonies of divine goodness, throughout the animated regions of earth, sea, and air, in the propriety and suitableness of creatures to their state, and objects to their appetites, are too evident and obvious to all men to need enlargement. God's works are all wonderful; and in wisdom and with goodness hath he made them.

JOHNSON.

THE WISDOM OF GOD IN THE WORKS OF CREATION.

REGULARLY built and finely decorated as the theatre of nature is, it is not till we come to consider how well adapted it is to the fable meant to be represented on it, that we fully understand the sagacity of the contriver. True it is, that the profusion of objects makes an irresistible impression on the eye; true, that the polish and perfection of each separate part raise in us the greatest admiration of that Being, who, having undertaken so great a design, has not left himself without a witness in the smallest part of it; but

all this is little to what we feel, when, after reflecting that the end he had in view was successive preservation, we come to examine the means he has made use of for that end; there it is that the curtain is evidently drawn aside, and the Divinity discovered in the full majesty of his glory; there it is that the proudest, the most reasonably proud of his creatures, and he that discovered the simple law by which all this universal harmony is preserved, and he that made man's first disobedience the subject of his sacred song, renounce the name of wise, which creatures as shortsighted as themselves had conferred on them; and, thoroughly conscious of their own littleness, ascribe the honour there where only it is due. Ascribe, how justly! For once admit what near six thousand years' experience has well confirmed—that forming a proper receptacle for the creatures he meant to place in it, and successive preservation, were the designs of the Creator, and then consider what a manifestation of wisdom it was to have placed the sun in such a manner as that every spot by turns should be cheered by its appearance, and benefited by the treasure it gives birth to; what a manifestation of wisdom to have made animals various in number, and different in their natures, to find each its proper food and nourishment in the country it belongs to; to have furnished each with an apparatus for providing this nourishment, a weapon for its defence, an habitation adapted to its want of it; to have made so many of them abandon their way of life, and change, as it were, their very natures, when their young ones stand in need of their

protection. How comes it, if not from the deepest thought and design, that man possesses those parts double which minister immediately to his occasions; that the most useful to him are placed in that part of the body where they can be of the greatest utility; that those of which the loss would be more fatal are most remote from danger, and best fortified against its approaches? Why does the eye naturally contract itself when the light becomes too strong for it? Why does the stomach give such faithful indications of whatever would be contrary to the welfare of the whole frame? Why are the several passages, as well those of the senses as those through which the aliment takes its course, provided in such a manner with bolts, and bars, and doors, that shut spontaneously upon whatever has once passed through them, that nothing hurtful to that part of the system it would intrude into can get through, nothing useful can be sent back? Nor is this all: consider the two great points of reason and conscience; the one to teach us how to make our abode here as comfortable as we can; the other to remind us as often as we swerve from our duty. Which of us can take half these precautions for the welfare of the child he loves, which have been taken by the universal parent for all his children? Which of us has any scheme half so conspicuous, either for the wisdom of the means or the steadiness in pursuing them?

MATY.

ON THE
OMNISCIENCE OF THE DEITY.

How incomprehensible is the knowledge of God, from whom nothing is concealed in heaven or on earth, or under the earth; who overlooks not the situation of a single atom, or the rising of a single thought! He counts the host of heaven, and through an immeasurable extent of empire calls all his subjects by their names. In one immense survey he beholds every creature, from the angel of his presence down even to the insect and the herb, and the dust we tread upon. The meanest individual of his kingdom is not unnoticed by him; or the meanest circumstance of the meanest individual. All hearts are open to him; all secrets are revealed to him; as to him there is no darkness and no mystery, so in him there is no ignorance, and for him there is no information. In every instant he discerns every motion and every thought, though they amount to myriads on myriads; and though in the instant they are produced they perish. As he discerns whatever is within us, or above us, or around us, or beneath us, as wide as immensity itself, without labour, without oversight, and without succession, easily, perfectly, and instantly; so he discerns whatever comes to pass throughout the universe, without error, without surprise, without confusion; clearly, calmly, and unweariedly accompanying, as it were, the universe through its unceasing changes, comprehending all things with

greater facility and certainty than the most enlarged mind he has created comprehends the smallest portion of his works ; knowing even the most intelligent of his creatures more perfectly than they are known unto themselves.

Such is the knowledge which the great Ruler of the world must possess and exercise in the government thereof: a knowledge so high that we never can attain unto a just conception of it; surpassing all our thoughts, and justifying all our wonder. Nor could the government of the world be carried on if this knowledge were not as wonderful in its application as it is incomprehensible in its extent. What prudence, what wisdom is not necessary to maintain the order, the comfort, and interests of a little kingdom, of a less society, yea, even of a family; what wisdom then is not needful to him who undertakes the government of the world! What wisdom must he not possess who maintains the good government thereof, uninterrupted and uncontrolled! What innumerable ends are there to be pursued in conjunction with one another, in a just subordination, and all in subserviency to one great end, the happiness of his subjects! What innumerable principles not only different, but even opposite, in their natures, are there to be directed in their operation, combined together in their just proportion, actuated to a certain degree, and within those limits made effectual, beyond them to be counteracted and restrained! How many different species of creatures, how many different humours, how many different wills, what blind and impetuous passions, what per-

verse and froward dispositions, what an infinite variety of objects to be attended to, and accommodated one unto another! He who can reconcile, and control, and regulate; he who, through all apparent disorders, can maintain the harmony of the world; he who, through all apparent evils, can promote its real interests, and raise out of what appears to our narrow minds a mighty chaos, that confounds us and oppresses us, the fair fabric of universal happiness; how wonderful must he be in counsel, how abundant must he be in means! Where but in God is wisdom to be found! Where but in the world's great Governor is the place of understanding!

CAPPE.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

MAGNIFICENCE OF THE UNIVERSE.

THE characters of grandeur and magnificence are so legibly inscribed upon the general face of nature that the most untaught eye cannot fail to read them, nor can the most uncultivated imagination contemplate them without admiration. The surface of the earth, considered merely as a vast picture drawn by the hand of Nature, exhibits scenes adapted to excite emotions of sublimity. Plains whose extent exceeds the limits of human vision; mountains whose sides are embrowned with craggy rocks, and whose majestic summits hide themselves in the clouds; seas whose spread-

ing waters unite far distant countries and oceans, which begirt the vast globe itself, are objects at all times striking to imagination. If from the earth we lift up our eyes on high, new scenes of magnificence demand our attentive admiration: the glorious sun, the eye and soul of this material world, possessing his seat amidst the vast expanse, and spreading light and heat through the world; and, in their turn, the numberless lamps of night illuminating the firmament with their native fires.

Let the great powers of nature be brought into action, and still more sublime and awful appearances arise to our view. Let woods and forests wave before the stormy winds; let Ocean "heave from his extended bed," and roll his threatening billows to the sky; let volcanos pour forth pillars of smoke and melted torrents from their fiery caverns; let lightnings dart their livid fires through the sky, whilst thunders roar among the bursting clouds; what imagination shall remain unimpressed with emotion of admiration mingled with terror?

A lively scene of grandeur and sublimity is naturally produced by scenes like these even in uninformed and uncultivated minds. But to the man whom philosophy has taught to penetrate beyond the surface of things, and to discover the principles and laws of nature, the works of God appear still more grand and sublime. Every individual body in nature is considered by the man thus enlightened as preserved in its form by the uniform action of one power or principle by which its parts are held together. By another universal

power he observes all the bodies upon this earth tending towards its centre; and, comparing the laws by which this attracting power is found to operate with the well known motions of the heavenly bodies, he finds that this single principle is sufficient to account for these motions; and consequently infers from analogy that this power, uniformly exerted, forms the grand chain which unites the several parts of the universe in one system. Hence he derives an inexpressibly sublime conception of that great Being who is the seat of this principle and the source of its operation. The man who is thus enlightened by the study of nature sees this earth, as a globe of vast magnitude, moving perpetually round the sun with a degree of rapidity much greater than has ever been produced by human force or art: at the same time he sees other globes, some less and others much larger than the earth, revolving with inconceivable rapidity round the sun, as their common centre, at distances so great that, though they may be expressed in numbers, they far exceed the utmost stretch of the human imagination.

This set of planets which he knows to have, with our earth, a common relation to the sun, he very reasonably concludes to be a system of worlds, all peopled with suitable inhabitants, and all deriving supplies of light and heat from the same source. Extending his views beyond this system, and finding from observation that the fixed stars are in themselves luminous bodies, and that their distance from the earth is so much greater than that of the planets or sun as to be

absolutely immeasurable, he concludes, upon the most probable grounds, that those sparkling gems which deck the robe of night are not placed in the heavens merely for the convenience of this earth, but are, like our glorious luminary, suns to their respective systems of worlds. And, finally, when, by the assistance of art, he is enabled to discover innumerable stars hitherto unobserved, he judges that he has better ground than mere conjecture for thinking that suns and worlds are extending through the immense regions of space infinitely beyond all human calculation or conception. How sublime the idea! how much are we indebted to that kind of philosophy which has put us in possession of it! especially since it has instructed us, on the clearest principle of reason, that of assigning to every effect an adequate cause, that this immense, this glorious universe is the habitation of one great Being who framed, who pervades, who animates, who governs the world! How reasonable is it that this universe, which is the mansion of the Divinity, should be the temple in which all created beings should, in one triumphant chorus, unite to say—"Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!"

ENFIELD.

ON THE SUPERIOR EXCELLENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

THE religion of the Gospel is the only one which has ever yet appeared among mankind, which is adequate to all the instinctive desires and expectations of the human mind. I am not now to speak of the excellence of this religion, or of its accommodation to all the wants and all the wretchedness of a being like man. I am to speak of it only as compared with the conclusions of human wisdom, as they appear either in the ancient or in the modern world. Both of them are before us; and from both I am persuaded the thoughtful mind must draw the same conclusion.

If we look to the ancient world,—to that period when science and philosophy had attained, through progressive ages, to their highest point of improvement, we see them terminating uniformly in doubt and indecision; we see various schools with various principles,—some leading to piety, others to atheism; the great mass of the people left (and left willingly) to the dominion of superstition,—and the wise concluding all their inquiries, either in the belief that these subjects were beyond the reach of human thought, or in the ardent prayer that the Deity would at last reveal himself to the inquiries of his creatures. If we look to the world as it at present exhibits itself in every country unvisited by the Gospel, we see it covered with varieties of imposture and superstition; the great principles of religion buried under the mass of barbarous rites or unpro-

ductive ceremonies ; and the wise and the thoughtful retiring from the delusions of the vulgar into the dark shade of doubt and scepticism. If, from these melancholy prospects, you turn your eye to the religion of the Gospel, you see a system which even its enemies acknowledge to be a system of religious and of moral grandeur. You see a system, simple in its doctrines, but sublime in their nature, beyond all that the imagination of man had hitherto in any age conceived ; adapted to the comprehension of the infant, and yet adequate to the exaltation of the sage ; comprehending within its pale all the most cultivated nations of mankind,—numbering among its disciples all the greatest names which have ever adorned humanity, and accepted by them as the highest exaltation of their present nature, and the surest foundation of their future hopes.

While you thus see the difference which exists between the religion of the Gospel and every other which has ever appeared among men, you are then to remember—that the Author of this religion was a man of humble origin, and of obscure parentage ; that his life was passed at a distance from the wise or the learned, among the poor and the lowly ; that a few years terminated his history ; and that a few humble inhabitants of Judea constituted all his society—and you are then to say, whether a religion of such a kind can have only a mortal origin ; whether there is any thing in the history of human nature at that age which in any degree corresponds to such a fact ; and whether there be any possible way by which the appearance of such a system

of religion, in such circumstances, can be accounted for but by the immediate providence and inspiration of God?

Such is the conclusion which I think must be drawn from the view of the nature of the religion of the Gospel, as it relates to the mind of the individual. There is a second view of it which arises from its relation to the welfare of society, or the prosperity of the world. When you look over the history of religion,—when you examine the nature of the systems of religious belief that have existed before the era of the Gospel, or which have arisen since,—you will find them marked by one uniform feature of mortal origin, that of carrying within themselves all the weakness or all the ignorance of the age or country in which they arose. You will see them incorporating with themselves the forms of government—the institutions of society—the manners, the opinions, and the prejudices which were peculiar to the country or age which gave them birth; sanctifying thus the errors and even the vices of barbarous times, and checking, by the most powerful of all restraints, the natural progress of the human mind, and all the improvements of which society is susceptible.—From this uniform picture of the narrowness of the mind of man, even in its greatest exertions, turn your eyes to the religion of the Gospel, and mark the view which it takes of human nature. You will see, in the first place, that it belongs to no age,—to no government,—and to no climate;—that it incorporates nothing with itself of the period of society when it arose;—that it embraces, on the contrary, the whole

human race in its contemplation ;—and that, while it leaves to society all the improvement of which it is capable, it prescribes only those general laws of social welfare upon which the prosperity of the world must finally rest.—You will see, in the second place, that this accommodation of the religion of the Gospel to the welfare of mankind has actually taken place ;—that it is it which has given to modern Europe the foundation of all its greatness ;—that it is it which has given to all Christian countries the relation of brethren, and to all Christian people the belief of equal rights and equal duties ;—that it is it which has thus (either directly or indirectly) broken the chains of the captive,—softened the sufferings of the prisoner,—poured even into the systems of legislation the elevation of its own spirit ; and given at last, to the poor and the lowly of mankind, to whom it was first preached, the dignity of men and the rights of nature.—You will see, in the last place, that the world is yet far below the perfection which the Gospel contemplates. In the eighteen hundred years that have passed since its promulgation among mankind, the human race have doubtless made in every respect the greatest advances ; and whether we regard the progress of knowledge, of laws, or of manners, we shall find in its influence the most powerful cause of this progress. Yet, who is there that looks at the internal government of nations, or the maxims by which they are yet governed, with regard to the nations around them, who does not sigh to think of the deep and selfish prejudices which still hang upon the minds of men ? Who is there who does not see that, if the

principles of the Gospel were really felt and fully acted upon, the prosperity of all nations would be consulted; that the human race would terminate in the simple conception of a family,—in family relations, in family duties, and family affection; and that the universe of mankind would find at last that they had only one Father in heaven, one relation to his various children, and one duty to their brethren upon earth?

* * * *

There is yet, however, a greater view of the subject; and I am to state, in the third place, that the religion of the Gospel is the only one which has ever appeared among mankind which is commensurate to the future hopes or expectations of the human soul. Upon this subject I have little necessity to dilate. When you look at the opinions of the unbaptized world, either in ancient or in modern times, you see in their views of futurity the traces only of a gross and a barbarous invention,—a state little elevated above the ignorance or the darkness of mortality,—in which the same passions, the same prejudices, and the same appetites prevail,—which promises only the continuation of the frail and feverish existence we have experienced,—and which holds forth no promise of some sublimer state of being, where nobler acquisitions may be made, and higher joys be tasted.—When you look at the religion of the Gospel, on the contrary (simply as it speaks upon this awful subject, and fearfully as it withdraws the veil which hides the sanctuary of God), you see a “new heaven and a new earth.” You see humanity exalted from the grossness of a lower world. You see all that is great, all that

is good, all that is pure in your nature bursting from the chains within which it has been confined, and purified by the merits and mediation of a diviner Being from the corruptions which it has acquired.—You see an immeasurable space extended, in which the ascending mind may pass to higher states “of knowledge, of wisdom, and of joy.”—You see (what is yet more) that, to this exaltation, the precepts of the same religion naturally conduct its followers; that the discipline which it prescribes in time is that which leads to the glories of eternity; and that, in the lowest situation of human nature, the mind of the Christian may be ripened, under the influence of the Spirit of God, to become at last the companion of the angel and the archangel, and of “the spirits of the just,” then “made perfect.” Of such doctrines I am not now to say that they are the only ones which meet all the instinctive wishes and expectations of our mysterious nature. I am only to remind you of their difference from every thing that human wisdom has taught, either in former or in succeeding ages; and to ask you, whether He who, eighteen hundred years ago, taught these doctrines, and proposed these views, was only a human being? Whether the difference of these doctrines, from all that nature and philosophy had arrived at, is not a proof of the difference of the origin from whence they proceeded?—and whether any other cause can be assigned for this astonishing exception from all the uniform appearances of human nature, than the immediate presence and providence of the God of salvation?

ALISON.

THE HUMANITY OF MODERN TIMES DERIVED FROM CHRISTIANITY.

It is incumbent on the philosophers of the present day to show from whence they derive that humanity to which they now lay claim, and which it seems has produced such beneficial consequences. If they say from the cultivation of their minds, the improvement of their understanding, and the extent of their knowledge and erudition, it is then obvious to ask, how it comes to pass that, before the appearance of the Gospel, philosophy and humanity were perfect strangers to each other, though they are now it seems such close and intimate friends? If we should only say that the philosophers of Greece and Italy were at least equal, both in natural sagacity and acquired learning to the philosophers of modern Europe, we should not be thought to do the latter any great injustice. Yet not one of those great, and wise, and enlightened men of antiquity seems to have had any apprehension that there was the least cruelty in a husband repudiating an irreproachable and affectionate wife from a mere humour or caprice; in a father destroying his new-born infant, or putting his adult son to death; in a master torturing or murdering his servant for a trivial offence, or for none at all; in wretches being trained up to kill each other for the amusement of the spectators; in a victorious prince oppressing and enslaving a whole country from mere avarice or ambition; in putting a great part of his prisoners to the sword, and enslaving all the

rest; nor, lastly, when the magnitude of the occasion seemed to require it, in offering up human sacrifices to the gods. So far from expressing (as far as I am able to recollect) a just detestation of these horrid practices, there were several of the most eminent philosophers that expressly approved and recommended some of the worst of them. Aristotle particularly, and Plato, both give a decided opinion in favour of destroying deformed or sickly infants. We have already seen that this execrable practice was even enjoined by Lycurgus, yet the humane Plutarch sees nothing unjust in any of his laws, and considers him as a completely perfect character. Thucydides relates the massacre of two thousand Helots, by the Lacedæmonians, in cold blood, and a multitude of other shocking barbarities, committed during the Peloponnesian war, without one word of censure or disapprobation; and Livy describes innumerable scenes of a similar nature, with the most perfect indifference and unconcern. Homer goes still further. He expressly approves and applauds the deliberate murder of all captives without distinction, even infants at the breast, and pronounces it to be perfectly right and just. And even Virgil, the tender, the elegant, the pathetic Virgil, he who, on other occasions, shows such exquisite feeling and sensibility, represents his hero as offering human sacrifices, without the smallest mark of horror or disgust; and has not only selected the shocking punishment of the Alban Dictator as a proper and graceful ornament of the shield of Æneas, but has dwelt on the dreadful circum-

stances of it with an appearance of complacency and satisfaction, and seems even to exult in it as a just retribution for the crime of the wretched sufferer. At tu Dictis Albane Maneres, *Æn.* viii., 642. It would be endless to enumerate instances of the same kind, which occur perpetually in the most distinguished writers of antiquity, and which incontestably prove that neither the brightest talents, nor the most successful cultivation of philosophy, of history, of eloquence, of poetry, of all those branches of literature which are properly called the *literæ humaniores*, and which are supposed to soften and humanize and meliorate the heart, could in any degree subdue the unyielding stubbornness of Pagan cruelty. On the contrary, it would be no difficult task to show that the more the ancients advanced in letters and the fine arts, and the more their communication and commerce with the different parts of the then known world was extended and enlarged, the more savage, oppressive, and tyrannical they became. And it is a fact no less remarkable, as well as a proof no less decisive of the doctrine I have been endeavouring to establish, that, on the discovery of the new world, the same astonishing phenomenon presented itself, that we have just been noticing in the old. In the very heart of South America an empire appeared which had made advances in government, in policy, in many useful and many ornamental arts, far beyond what could have been expected without the use of letters, and infinitely beyond all the surrounding nations of that country. And it appeared, also, that these polished Mexicans (for it is to

those I allude) exceeded their neighbours the Peruvians, and all the other Indian kingdoms, in fierceness and in cruelty, as much as they surpassed them in all the conveniences and improvements of social and civilized life.

What shall we now say to the philosophy of the present age, which assumes to itself the exclusive merit of all the humanity and benevolence which are to be found in the world ; and how shall we account for the striking contrast between the insensibility and hardheartedness of the ancient philosophers and those professions of gentleness and philanthropy which their brethren in our own times so ostentatiously display in their writings and in their discourses ? The only adequate and assignable reason of the difference is, that the latter have a source to draw from which was unknown to the former ; that to the Gospel they are indebted for all their fine sentiments and declamations on the subject of benevolence ; which, however, seem never to reach their hearts, or influence their conduct ; for (as fatal experience has shown) the moment they are possessed of power, they become the most inhuman of tyrants.

BISHOP PORTEUS.

AN ADDRESS TO DEISTS.

SUPPOSE the mighty work accomplished, the cross trampled upon, Christianity every where proscribed, and the religion of nature once more become the religion of Europe ; what advantage will you have derived for your country, or to

yourselves, from the exchange? I know your answer—you will have freed the world from the hypocrisy of priests and the tyranny of superstition.—No; you forget that Lycurgus, and Numa, and Odin, and Manco Capac, and all the great legislators of ancient and modern story, have been of opinion that the affairs of civil society could not be well conducted without *some* religion; you must of necessity introduce a priesthood, with probably as much hypocrisy; a religion, with assuredly more superstition than that which you now reprobate with such indecent and ill grounded contempt. But I will tell you from what you will have freed the world: you will have freed it from its abhorrence of vice, and from every powerful incentive to virtue; you will, with the religion, have brought back the depraved morality of Paganism; you will have robbed mankind of their firm assurance of another life; and thereby you will have despoiled them of their patience, of their humility, of their charity, of their chastity, of all those mild and silent virtues which, (however despicable they may appear in your eyes), are the only ones which meliorate and sublime our nature; which Paganism never knew, which spring from Christianity alone, which do or might constitute our comfort in this life, and without the possession of which, another life, if after all there should happen to be one, must, (unless a miracle be exerted in the alteration of our disposition), be more vicious and more miserable than this is.

Perhaps you will contend that the universal light of reason, that the truth and fitness of things

are of themselves sufficient to exalt the nature and regulate the manners of mankind. Shall we never have done with this groundless commendation of natural law? Look into the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and you will see the extent of its influence over the Gentiles of those days; or, if you dislike Paul's authority and the manners of antiquity, look into the more admired accounts of modern voyagers, and examine its influence over the Pagans of our own times, over the sensual inhabitants of Otaheite, over the cannibals of New Zealand, or the remorseless savages of America.—But these men are barbarians. Your law of nature, notwithstanding, extends even to them. But they have misused their reason: they have then the more need of, and would be the more thankful for, that revelation which you, with an ignorant and fastidious self sufficiency, deem useless.—But these, however, you will think, are extraordinary instances; and that we ought not from these to take our measure of the excellency of the law of nature, but rather from the civilized states of China or Japan, or from the nations which flourished in learning and in arts before Christianity was heard of in the world. You mean to say, that by the law of nature, which you are desirous of substituting in the room of the Gospel, you do not understand those rules of conduct which an individual, abstracted from the community, and deprived of the institutions of mankind, could excogitate for himself; but such a system of precepts as the most enlightened men of the most enlightened ages have recom-

mended to our observance. Where do you find this system? We cannot meet with it in the works of Stobæus, or the Scythian Anacharsis, nor in those of Plato or of Cicero, nor in those of the Emperor Antoninus or the slave Epicetetus, for we are persuaded that the most animated considerations of the *πρεπον* and the *honestum*, of the beauty of virtue and the fitness of things, are not able to furnish even a Brutus himself with permanent principles of action; much less are they able to purify the polluted recesses of a vitiated heart, to curb the irregularity of appetite, or restrain the impetuosity of passion in common men. If you order us to examine the works of Grotius, of Puffendorff, or Burlamaqui, or Hutcheson, for what you understand by the law of nature, we apprehend that you are in a great error in taking your notions of natural law, as discoverable by natural reason, from the elegant systems of it which have been drawn up by Christian philosophers, since they have all laid their foundations, either tacitly or expressly, upon a principle derived from revelation—a thorough knowledge of the being and attributes of God: and even those amongst ourselves, who, rejecting Christianity, still continue Theists, are indebted to revelation for those sublime speculations concerning the Deity which you have fondly attributed to the excellency of your own unassisted reason.

BISHOP WATSON.

THE
EQUANIMITY OF A TRUE CHRISTIAN.

THE wisdom of the Gospel is chiefly addressed to the heart, and therefore is easily understood by all. It is in touching that it enlightens us, in touching that it persuades. Directed by the light of faith, the eye of the true Christian is intensely fixed on the great sphere of eternity. He hears the solemn voice of his religion, which tells him that in man there are two distinct beings, the one material and perishable, the other spiritual and immortal. He knows and contemplates the rapid advance of that futurity, which is not measured by the succession of days and nights, or the revolution of years and ages. Before these profound and magnificent impressions all worldly glory fades. No interests can possess or transport his heart but those to which he is invited from above. No, not a desire in his breast, not a movement in his life; no evil in his apprehension, or happiness in his conception, that refers not to eternity; he is all immensity of views and projects: and hence that true nobility of spirit, that calm, majestic indifference which looks down on the visionary enterprises of man, sees them, unstable and fleeting as the waves of a torrent, pressed and precipitated by those that pursue, and scarce tell you where they are, when you behold them no more: hence likewise that equality of soul, which is troubled at no reverse or vicissitude of life, which knows not those tormenting successions, those rapid alter-

nations of pleasure and pain so frequent in the breast of worldlings: to be elevated by the slightest success, depressed by the slightest reverse, intoxicated at a puff of praise, inconsolable at the least appearance of contempt, reanimated at a gleam of respect, tortured by an air of coldness and indifference, unbounded in all wishes, and disgusted after all possession, is a spectacle of human misery that would enhance the peace of a true Christian, did all the influence of a divine religion not infuse into his heart as much pity for his mistaken brethren as it does superior dignity and elevation of sentiments.

KIRWAN.

THE CONSOLATION TO BE DERIVED FROM CHRISTIANITY.

No, my beloved brethren! this world cannot, it was never designed by Providence that this world should afford any source or promise of happiness equal to what the prospect of immortality, and the hopes of the Christian stretching into eternity, hold out to us even in this world. In this prospect alone, we are to look for those powerful restraints that are equal to control the unruly wills of men, and to bridle the tumultuous and disorderly passions that destroy the public peace, and imbitter all the enjoyments of the private domestic circle. In these hopes alone we are to look for those correctives which, by chastening our pleasures and enjoyments, and restraining them within the bounds of virtue, innocence, and right, keep every

thing in its own place, preserve order, and harmony, and concord in the society to which we hold, and secure the peace of the individual with others and with himself:—with others by his rectitude and integrity of conduct; by the spirit of universal benevolence he habitually breathes; by his blameless, inoffensive deportment and manners; and with himself, by his having no experience of the fatal consequences of vicious habits, early and long indulged; by feeling no stings of conscience to imbitter his days.

Sorrow and pain and suffering are the earthly portion of man. He is born to them *as the sparks fly upwards*. There is nothing more regular or uniform in the course of nature than their progress and operation in every stage of his life. Stretched on the bed of straw, and under the mean and forlorn roof with the poor and the indigent, the whole train of human calamities will equally force their way through all the barriers that fence the habitations of the great and the affluent, even to the throne. Of this our unhappy age furnishes us with examples equal to what the world has ever known since sin first introduced confusion and disorder among the works of God. Where, but in the great truths which I have been unfolding to you;—where, but in the reflections they suggest;—where, but in the views they open to us;—can we look for any permanent support under this burden of universal, unavoidable misery, as it presses on the whole race of man; or as it weighs down every individual, bearing the proportion that falls to his own lot?

It is true, that neither these truths, nor the

reflections they suggest, nor the views they open to us, can exempt us from the condition of our nature. They will not secure us against sufferings and calamities; we must all bear our cross. But they will strengthen us for the trial; they will take from misery its bitterness; they will strip affliction of its sting. They will tell the Christian that every period of his distress will issue in eternal happiness, and that *what he sows in tears he will in due season reap in joy*. Does he pine in poverty? Does he earn his scanty bread by the sweat of his brow? They teach, and they assist him to bear with patient resignation, the condition of his mortal lot, in humble submission to the will of the Sovereign Disposer of all things, and in the certain expectation of the happiness which he reserves for *the poor in spirit* in that kingdom, where *rich and poor shall meet together* before him, and he will show himself to be their common Father.

Has he suffered any of those signal reverses of fortune, common to all men in all times, but more particularly to be expected in this age of strange revolutions, that suddenly reduce the most flourishing and opulent to the extreme of want and wretchedness? From the truths we have been contemplating he learns that he has only been stripped of transitory advantages, in which it was never designed that he should have any secure or permanent inheritance. Beyond this vale of tears they instruct him to look for other possessions, which no revolutions of this world can affect, no injustice seize, no violence wrest from him.

Does he suffer in the afflictions of others? Does

he weep by the bed of sickness, and witness the last agonies of a revered parent or a beloved child? Or does he hang over the long loved partner of all his joys and all his sorrows, languishing in pain, and waiting the stroke that is to tear up all his affections, and leave him, henceforward, to draw the dregs of life in unblessed singleness and solitude? Through the same paths of pain and suffering, these truths will teach him that he must himself soon follow to where those objects of his love are only *gone before*, and where he will sit down with them in the blessed society of the people of God; there, where no painful sympathies will ever wound their affections; no anguish of separation ever interrupt their mutual enjoyment; there, where *death shall be no more, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things shall be done away.*

And when the trial is brought home to himself, when the hour is come in which his mortal frame sinks under the pressure of age, of disease, and nature exhausted warns him that his dissolution is near; even that hour, so appalling in its approaches to the unbelieving and to the man of guilt, comes to him stripped of its chief terrors. Through *the valley of the shadow of death*, to which it leads him, a ray of light beams from the Gospel as the *dawning of the eternal day*; and over *that land of darkness as of darkness itself, and without order*, all is bright, and serene, and calm, and the promise of endless rest, and peace, and bliss beyond. As the outer man decayeth, he is strengthened in the inner man. As every earthly object fades gradually from his sight, faith brings in nearer view to

his hopes that heavenly seat, where, *seeing even as he is seen*, there will be no more exercise for his faith, and where his hopes will be superseded by enjoyment. His ears are closing to every voice, in which, *through each endearing interchange of affection*, his youth and his age took delight; but still he hears the voice of him who *poured out his soul unto death, that he through him might live*, assuring him of that glorious termination to all his sufferings, to which he himself led the way: *I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he die, yet shall he live*. The trust he had ever reposed in this his Saviour and his God strengthens, as he feels the moment approaching when he is to stand before him; and the words of the holy Job, anticipating that blissful moment, are the last that tremble on his livid and convulsive lips—*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another*. Change this for the language of infidelity, you who have brutified your soul into a persuasion that the dying words of man are but the last sounds of a piece of mechanism falling to pieces; but leave us to *die the death of the righteous, and to have our latter end like unto theirs*.

BISHOP O'BEIRNE.

THE

DEATHBED COMFORT OF A CHRISTIAN.

Who ever left the precincts of mortality without casting a wistful look on what he left behind, and a trembling eye on the scene that is before him? Being formed by our Creator for enjoyments, even in this life, we are endowed with a sensibility to the objects around us. We have affections, and we delight to indulge them; we have hearts, and we want to bestow them. Bad as the world is, we find in it objects of affection and attachment. Even in this waste and howling wilderness there are spots of verdure and of beauty, of power to charm the mind, and to make us cry out "It is good for us to be here." When, after the observation and experience of years, we have found out the objects of the soul, and met with minds congenial to our own, what pangs must it give to the heart to think of parting for ever! We contract an attachment even to inanimate objects. The tree under whose shadow we have often sat; the fields where we have frequently strayed; the hill, the scene of contemplation, or the haunt of friendship, become objects of passion to the mind, and upon our leaving them excite a temporary sorrow and regret. If these things can affect us with uneasiness, how great must be the affliction when stretched on that bed from which we shall rise no more; and looking about, for the last time, on the sad circle of our weeping friends;—how great must be the affliction to dissolve at once all the attachments of life; to bid an eternal adieu to

the friends whom we long have loved, and to part for ever with all that is dear below the sun! But let not the Christian be disconsolate. He parts with the objects of his affection to meet them again; to meet them in a better world, where change never enters, and from whose blissful mansions sorrow flies away. At the resurrection of the just in the great assembly of the sons of God, when all the family of heaven are gathered together, not one person shall be missing that was worthy of thy affection or esteem. And if among imperfect creatures, and in a troubled world, the kind, the tender, and the generous affections have such power to charm the heart, that even the tears which they occasion delight us, what joy unspeakable and glorious will they produce when they exist in perfect minds, and are improved by the purity of the heavens!

LOGAN.

CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE morality he taught was the purest, the soundest, the sublimest, the most perfect that had ever before entered into the imagination or proceeded from the lips of man. And this he delivered in a manner the most striking and impressive; in short, sententious, solemn, important, ponderous rules or maxims, or in familiar, natural, affecting similitudes and parables. He showed also a most consummate knowledge of the human heart, and dragged to light all its artifices, subtleties, and evasions. He discovered every thought as it arose in the mind; he detected every irregular

desire before it ripened into action. He manifested, at the same time, the most perfect impartiality. He had no respect of persons. He reprobated vice in every station, wherever he found it, with the same freedom and boldness ; and he added to the whole the weight, the irresistible weight, of his own example. He, and he only, of all the sons of men, acted up in every the minutest instance to what he taught ; and his life exhibited a perfect portrait of his religion. But what completed the whole was, that he taught, as the evangelist expresses it, *with authority*, with the authority of a divine teacher. The ancient philosophers could do nothing more than give good advice to their followers ; they had no means of enforcing that advice ; but our great lawgiver's precepts are all *divine commands*. He spoke in the name of God : he called himself the Son of God. He spoke in a tone of superiority and authority, which no one before him had the courage or the right to assume : and finally, he enforced every thing he taught by the most solemn and awful sanctions, by a promise of eternal felicity to those who obeyed him, and a denunciation of the most tremendous punishment to those who rejected him.

These were the circumstances which gave our blessed Lord the authority with which he spake. No wonder then that the people "were astonished at his doctrines," and that they all declared "he spake as never man spake."

BISHOP PORTEUS,

THE
CHARACTER OF JESUS CONTRASTED
WITH THAT OF MAHOMET.

CONSIDERED then in all its circumstances, the history of Christ shrinks not from comparison with the most partial and lofty representation of the prophet of Arabia.

Of both we find that the earlier part of life, before the publication of their respective missions, passed away in silence, private and undistinguished. The first years of Mahomet were busied in the cares of merchandise ; till returning to his native city, he devoted to solitude and retirement the leisure which his opulence had procured. The youth of Jesus was spent in domestic privacy, and was remarkable only for affectionate and dutiful submission to his parents ; unless, indeed, when in the temple, he by his ready answers to the questions of the Rabbins, and his skilful exposition of the Scriptures, astonished those that heard him, and gave an omen of his future greatness.

The designs of Mahomet were gradually and cautiously unfolded, and in order to prepare the minds of his countrymen for the reception of his faith, he first artfully persuaded his own relations and domestics, and drew to his side the most powerful of his neighbours.

Jesus walked forth by the sea of Galilee, and saw fishers casting their nets ; these were his first converts and disciples. Though they were desti-

tute of riches and power, he found in them what his ministry required, an honest and a willing spirit. He won them neither by subtle arguments nor crafty persuasions ; but bade them forsake their nets and follow him, to see his humble dwelling, to hear his heavenly discourses to the people, and witness the wonders he was going to perform.

Jesus called his hearers to repentance, but Mahomet to conquest.

At their first appearance they were both compelled to avoid the rage of the multitude, who would have destroyed them : but Mahomet escaped by a secret, ignominious flight, and Jesus by a public miracle.

The revelation of the Arabian prophet was inconsistent ; a system of contradiction, continually shifting with the views of his policy, and the necessities of his imposture ; now looking towards Mecca, and now to Jerusalem. Widely different was the conduct of Christ. He did not seek to accommodate his doctrine to fortuitous changes in his external circumstances ; he did not at one time revoke what he had asserted, or contradict what he had enjoined at another. Every part of his teaching was regular and consistent in the objects to which it was directed, and the language in which it was conveyed.

Mahomet allured his followers with the glories of a visible monarchy, and the splendour of temporal dominion. In him we behold the lord of war, and the destroyer of mankind, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands who fell by his desolating sword ; laying cities in flames ;

carrying misery and bloodshed through the earth ; and pursued in his victorious career by the lamentations and curses of its inhabitants. In Jesus we see the adorable Prince of peace, the friend and Saviour of the world, riding meekly to the holy city, hailed with the acclamations and blessings of much people, whom he had rescued from sin and death, wiping the tears from all eyes, and healing every sickness and every disease.

And here the comparison must cease. The events that followed in our Saviour's life are too august to be placed in competition with any mortal power, and can be comprehended only by minds habituated to the contemplation of heavenly objects. Let us consider the passion of our Lord, and the magnificent scenes of his resurrection and ascension ; and then ask in what part of all the history of Mahometanism any parallel or resemblance can be found ? Let us, in imagination, hear and see the blessed Jesus, when he gives his apostles authority to go forth and baptize all nations, and preach in his name repentance and remission of sins ; when he empowers them to cast out evil spirits, to speak with new tongues, and to work wonders ; when he holds up to them the promise of the Comforter, and power from on high, and when, having blessed them, he ascends into heaven, where he is for ever seated in glory on the right hand of God.

But chiefly what raises Christ and his religion far above all the fictions of Mahomet, is that awful alternative of hopes and fears, that looking for of judgment, which our Christian faith sets before us.

At that day when time, the great arbiter of truth and falsehood, shall bring to pass the accomplishment of the ages, and the Son of God shall make his enemies his footstool, then shall the deluded followers of the great impostor, disappointed of the expected intercession of their prophet, stand trembling and dismayed at the approach of the glorified Messiah.

Then shall they say, yonder cometh in the clouds that Jesus, whose religion we laboured to destroy, whose temples we profaned, whose servants and followers we cruelly oppressed! Behold he cometh: but no longer the humble son of Mary, no longer a mere mortal prophet, the equal of Abraham and of Moses, as that deceiver taught us; but the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father! the Judge of mankind! the Sovereign of angels! the Lord of all things both in earth and heaven!

DR. J. WHITE.

CHARACTER OF THE KORAN.

It requires no uncommon effort of sagacity to discover the wide difference that subsists between the religions of Mahomet and Christ, in their influence on the conceptions of the imagination, and the direction of the appetites. The doctrines which the prophet of Arabia has taught concerning the divine perfections too frequently accord with the lowest ideas of the human mind; and though they are at times illuminated by sublime or magnificent images, yet many of the supposed beauties of the Koran consist rather in the

brilliancy of the language than in the majesty of the thought. How much Mahomet was indebted to the writings of the prophets and of the evangelists for the greater part of what is sublime or beautiful in his theology, his compositions declare ; but with this sacred and hallowed imagery he blended the impure superstitions and gross conceptions of his countrymen. For the wild profusion and incongruous mixture of absurdity and sense which pervade his writings, it is scarcely possible to account on any other supposition than the natural incapacity even of the wisest man to form upon every subject, and to preserve, upon every occasion, just and consistent notions of the divine perfections.

In what glowing colours is the greatness of the Deity displayed almost in the commencement of the Koran ; and with what zeal does the imagination go along with descriptions which seem so suited to the supreme dignity of his nature, and the glorious excellence of his works. Yet hardly is this enthusiasm excited before all the ardours of the mind are repressed, when we find this sublime Being descend to the meanest and most contemptible employments ; prescribing laws which minister more to the appetites than to the interests of men ; and regulating with the same care, at one moment, the order of secret and impure enjoyment, and, in the next, the discipline in which men are to be trained for eternity.

In the composition of the fanatical impostor, credulity is often intermixed with craft. The fervours, which are at first assumed voluntarily and insidiously, return by a kind of mechanical

force : in process of time the glow of his fancy and the tumult of his passions are no longer artificial but real : and in this last stage of depravity, combined with folly, the enthusiast is inseparably blended with the hypocrite in the whole mass of character ; and in the same action we may discover the wiliness of the one and the weakness of the other. Hence the inconsistencies of Mahomet are to be ascribed partly to cunning, in accommodating his doctrines to the prejudices of other men, and partly to fanaticism, which prevented him from controlling the impetuous, but uncertain, sallies of his own mind.

Hence the God of Abraham and of Moses, the incomprehensible Being, who, in the language of Isaiah, liveth from eternity to eternity, is associated with the gross and limited attributes of eastern idolatry ; and the altar which is erected to the Father of universal nature, is commanded to be approached with the slavish rites of a timorous and abject superstition.

Of that eternity, the representation of which forms so great a part of every religion, the ideas which Mahomet has given are not more pure or more consistent. Of such a system of opinions, so perplexed by inconsistency, and so debased by impurity, the effect upon the mind is obvious. Though all men probably can feel the sublimity of those descriptions which sometimes occur, yet the impression is momentary : but the apprehensions which are entertained of the Deity from his agency, and the conceptions which are formed of futurity from its employments, are permanent. The beauties of the Koran may captivate the

fancy; but its errors at once delude the judgment, degrade the spirit, and pollute the affections. How can the follower of Mahomet, therefore, feel any enlargement given to his understanding from representations of a Deity who, though sometimes eloquently or magnificently described, is yet familiarized to his apprehension in the character of an impure or capricious being? How can he be excited to the exercise or improvement of the higher powers of his nature, by the views which his religion affords him of a futurity in which these powers seem to be unemployed; in which the enjoyments of animal pleasure form a great part of the reward assigned to virtue; and to the relish of which no other preparation seems necessary, than to assimilate the mind to an ambition as limited, and to desires as impure?

Though the existence of a Deity has been admitted as well in the darkest as the most enlightened ages; and though it is equally supported by the testimony of tradition and the authority of reason, yet the ideas entertained of his attributes have been much diversified by various causes in the constitution of men's minds, or in the circumstances of their situation. The northern nations, fierce and unpolished in their manners, assailed by the severities of an inclement sky, and habituated to the contemplation of dreary wastes or rugged mountains, have arrayed their deities in every terrible quality. Among the inhabitants of the east, whose tempers seem to be cast in a softer mould, and whose senses are accustomed to more delicate and more beautiful prospects of nature, the characters of their gods

wear a lovelier aspect. The same propensity in the worshipper to assimilate the object of his worship to his own ruling passions, or his own favourite tenets, may be traced through individuals and sects. The God of the benevolent man is, in his contemplation, surrounded with the mild lustre of benevolence ; the God of the malignant is seen only with frowns of displeasure, and armed with the thunderbolt of vengeance. In the deity of Zeno, we perceive much of the sullen dignity and harsh inflexibility in which the philosopher himself placed the supreme good ; and upon the same principle Epicurus ascribed to his gods that exemption from the solicitude of care, and the bustle of activity, which he represented as essential to happiness, both human and divine. But in the God whom Christians are commanded to adore, none of those imperfections can be discerned which are usually and justly imputed to the peculiar sentiments of individuals, or the general habits of nations. Without the jargon of science, and without the rant of enthusiasm, he is presented to us with all the perfections which were ever assigned to the divinity by the reason of the contemplative philosopher or the fancy of the enraptured poet.

DR. J. WHITE.

THE

Bibine Origin of the Christian Religion

INFERRED FROM

THE CONDUCT OF CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES.

HERE then is an effect proceeding from a cause, according to human estimation, inadequate to produce it. Nothing similar, as far as we are informed, ever took place before or since. Can any one believe that an obscure peasant, in an obscure country, with no better assistance than twelve poor fishermen, could have brought about so great and extraordinary a change by any possible mode of human exertion? or is it credible that, without cooperation and support, they would have taken the steps they did to accomplish their object? If they had no surer method of advancing their cause, than that with which their own efforts could have supplied them, they would have had recourse to those things which are commonly successful on similar occasions; they would have attempted to impose on the understandings of mankind by conciliation and flattery: they would have dazzled their imaginations by visionary prospects of future advantage; and would have moved every engine, which is usually directed by the artful and designing, against human weakness. But these things, so often practised by others, could not be turned to advantage by them. They possessed neither influence, wealth, nor power; they had (with few exceptions) neither abilities, learning, address, nor eloquence; so

far indeed were they from aiming at allurements, that the method which they took of making converts to their cause was likely to operate as an effectual discouragement. They attacked the obstinate and rooted prejudices universally entertained for the established forms of religion; and loudly condemned those darling follies, vices, and superstitions to which mankind had shown so long and fond an attachment; they exhorted their hearers to embrace a cause which could not fail to involve them in the most serious evils; and to acknowledge the divine mission of one, whom, far from clothing with supernatural splendour, they represented as terminating a miserable life with an ignominious death. All they had to put into the opposite scale was the promise of a recompense, invisible and distant; and of such a nature as preconceived opinions must reasonably regard as chimerical and delusive. This address was not made in a dark age, or to a savage people, but to the wisest and most enlightened nations of the earth, at a time when human learning and philosophy were at their greatest height; thus every motive that usually influences the mind of man, religion, custom, law, policy, pride, interest, vice, and even philosophy, were united against the gospel. These are enemies at all times formidable and difficult to be subdued, even when attacked upon equal ground; but now entrenched and rendered inaccessible by the strongest bulwarks of civil power; yet against all these obstacles Christianity struggled, and completely triumphed. It overturned the temples and altars of the gods; it silenced the oracles;

it humbled the pride of emperors ; it confounded the wisdom of the philosophers ; and introduced into the most civilized nations of the world a new principle of virtue and religion. This extraordinary influence and authority it has maintained for nearly eighteen hundred years ; it has been looked up to as the certain and unerring road, not only to present, but future happiness ; and is still regarded by the wise and good as a system founded by the gracious Saviour and Deliverer of mankind.

REV. T. ROBINSON.

SUPERSTITION AND ATHEISM CONTRASTED.

WHAT, I would ask, are the general effects of superstition and atheism upon the happiness and the conduct of mankind? Superstition, it is granted, has many direct sorrows, but atheism has no direct joys. Superstition admits fear mingled with hope, but atheism, while it excludes hope, affords a very imperfect security against fear. Superstition is never exposed to the dreary vacuities in the soul over which atheism is wont to brood in solitude and silence ; but atheism is sometimes haunted by forebodings scarcely less confused, or less unquiet, than those by which superstition is annoyed. Superstition stands aghast at the punishments reserved for wicked men in another state ; but atheism cannot disprove the possibility of such a state to all men, accompanied by consciousness, and fraught with evils equally dreadful in degree, and even in duration, with

those punishments. Superstition has often preserved men from crimes; but atheism tends to protect them from weaknesses only. Superstition imposes fresh restraints upon the sensual appetites, though it may often let loose the malignant passions; but atheism takes away many restraints from these appetites, without throwing equal checks upon those passions, under many circumstances which may excite them in the minds of its votaries. Superstition is eager from a vicious excess of credulity, but atheism is often obstinate from an excess of incredulity equally vicious. Superstition is sometimes docile from conscious weakness; but atheism is always haughty, from real or supposed strength. Superstition errs, and perverts only in consequence of error; but atheism rejects, and, for the most part, disdains to examine after rejection. Superstition catches at appearances, but atheism starts back from realities. Superstition may, in some favourable moment, be awakened to the call of truth; but atheism is generally deaf to the voice of that "charmer, charm she ever so wisely."

PARR.

THE DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

WHEN God created the human species, either he wished their happiness, or he wished their misery, or he was indifferent and unconcerned about both.

If he had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses

to be so many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment : or by placing us amidst objects so ill suited to our perceptions, as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for example, every thing we tasted, bitter ; every thing we saw, loathsome ; every thing we touched, a sting ; every smell a stench, and every sound a discord.

If he had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune (as all design by this supposition is excluded) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to produce it. But either of these (and still more both of them) being too much to be attributed to accident, nothing remains but the first supposition, that God, when he created the human species, wished their happiness ; and made for them the provision which he has made, with that view, and for that purpose.

The same argument may be proposed in different terms, thus : Contrivance proves design ; and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances ; and all the contrivances which we are acquainted with, are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil, no doubt, exists ; but is never, that we can perceive, the object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache ; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it : or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance ; but it is not the *object*

of it. This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you would hardly say of the sickle, that it is made to cut the reaper's fingers, though, from the construction of the instrument, and the manner of using it, this mischief often happens. But if you had occasion to describe instruments of torture or execution, This engine, you would say, is to extend the sinews; this to dislocate the joints; this to break the bones; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Here, pain and misery are the very *objects* of the contrivance. Now nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of nature. We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said, This is to irritate; this to inflame; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys; this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout: If by chance he come at a part of which he knows not the use, the most he can say is, that it is useless; no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment. Since then God hath called forth his consummate wisdom to contrive and provide for our happiness, and the world appears to have been constituted with this design at first; so long as this constitution is upholden by him, we must in reason suppose the same design to continue.

The contemplation of universal nature rather bewilders the mind than affects it. There is always a bright spot in the prospect, upon which

the eye rests; a single example, perhaps, by which each man finds himself more *convinced* than by all others put together. I seem, for my own part, to see the benevolence of the Deity more clearly in the pleasures of very young children than in any thing in the world. The pleasures of grown persons may be reckoned partly of their own procuring; especially if there has been any industry, or contrivance, or pursuit, to come at them; or if they are founded, like music, painting, &c. upon any qualification of their own acquiring. But the pleasures of a healthy infant are so manifestly provided for it by *another*, and the benevolence of the provision is so unquestionable, that every child I see at its sport, affords to my mind a kind of sensible evidence of the finger of God, and of the disposition which directs it.

But the example which strikes each man most strongly, is the true example for him: and hardly two minds hit upon the same; which shows the abundance of such examples about us.

We conclude, therefore, that God wills and wishes the happiness of his creatures. And this conclusion being once established, we are at liberty to go on with the rule built upon it, namely, "that the method of coming at the will of God, concerning any action, by the light of nature, is to inquire into the tendency of that action to promote or diminish the general happiness."

PALEY.

ON DEATH.

CHILDREN of men! it is well known to you, that you are a mortal race. Death is the law of your nature, the tribute of your being, the debt which all are bound to pay. On these terms you received life, that you should be ready to give it up when Providence calls you to make room for others, who, in like manner, when their time is come, shall follow you. He who is unwilling to submit to death, when Heaven decrees it, deserves not to have lived. You might as reasonably complain that you did not live before the time appointed for your coming into the world, as lament that you are not to live longer, when the period of your quitting it is arrived. What Divine Providence hath made necessary, human prudence ought to comply with cheerfully. Submit, at any rate, you must; and is it not much better to follow, of your own accord, than to be dragged reluctantly, and by force? What privilege have you to plead, or what reason to urge, why you should possess an exemption from the common doom? All things around you are mortal and perishing. Cities, states, and empires have their periods set. The proudest monuments of human art moulder into dust. Even the works of nature wax old and decay. In the midst of this universal tendency to change, could you expect that to your frame alone a permanent duration should be given? All who have gone before you have submitted to the stroke of death. All who have come after you shall undergo the same

fate. The great and the good, the prince and the peasant, the renowned and the obscure, travel alike the road which leads to the grave. At the moment when you expire, thousands throughout the world shall together with you be yielding up their breath. Can that be held a great calamity which is common to you with every thing that lives on earth ; which is an event as much according to the course of nature as it is that leaves should fall in autumn, or that fruit should drop from the tree when it is fully ripe ?

The pain of death cannot be very long, and is probably less severe than what you have at other times experienced. The pomp of death is more terrifying than death itself. It is to the weakness of imagination that it owes its chief power of dejecting your spirits ; for when the force of the mind is roused, there is almost no passion in our nature but what has showed itself able to overcome the fear of death. Honour has defied death ; love has despised it ; shame has rushed upon it ; revenge has disregarded it ; grief a thousand times has wished for its approach. Is it not strange that reason and virtue cannot give you strength to surmount that fear, which, even in feeble minds, so many passions have conquered ? What inconsistency is there in complaining so much of the evils of life, and being at the same time so afraid of what is to terminate them all ! Who can tell whether his future life might not teem with disasters and miseries, as yet unknown, were it to be prolonged according to his wish ! At any rate, is it desirable to draw life out to the last dregs, and to wait till old age pour upon you

its whole store of diseases and sorrows? You lament that you are to die; but, did you view your situation properly, you would have much greater cause to lament if you were chained to this life for two or three hundred years, without possibility of release. Expect, therefore, calmy that which is natural in itself, and which must be fit, because it is the appointment of Heaven. Perform your duty as a good subject to the Deity, during the time allotted you; and rejoice that a period is fixed for your dismissal from the present warfare. Remember that a slavish dread of death destroys all the comfort of that life which you seek to preserve. Better to undergo the stroke of death at once, than to live in perpetual misery from the fear of dying.

BLAIR.

ON A PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE.

IN asserting then our belief in a particular Providence we maintain that, wherever we are, there is the Almighty with us, surrounding us with his boundless presence, including and penetrating every part of our substance, and searching the most secret recesses of our heart with his unerring eye; foreseeing, through an infinite series of causes, the things that ever shall be, as though they now are; ordaining events apparently the most casual and fortuitous, and directing every contingency in human affairs. No circumstance too small, no accident too trifling for his omniscience to foresee, or for his omnipotence to control; but all conspiring to form a part in

his incomprehensible scheme of universal government. Now that the Almighty regards events as they pass, inasmuch as they are not hid from his general view, he who disbelieves in a particular Providence, will not deny: but if he regards them only as a spectator, and not as a director, he regards them not as a moral governor, he regards them in a manner unworthy of the Deity. But here the objection lies; shall the great God, whose habitation is in seats of endless bliss, condescend to look down upon this frail and miserable world, to watch the appetites, to govern the passions of every sinful creature, and to direct the course of every fortuitous event in human life? Shall we reason thus of the Almighty, of that great Being whose presence necessarily pervades every particle of created matter? Where is the spot in this lower world on which his eye is not fixed, where is that space into which his presence is not infused? Is there a thought in our hearts which he has not "understood long before?" As then he is omnipresent, what event can have escaped his sight; as he is omniscient, what contingency can have escaped his preknowledge? As he is a moral governor, for his moral government in some sort no one can deny, will he not necessarily direct every event to the furtherance and support of that administration? Do we suppose that the government of God is conducted on the same principles, and in the same manner, as the government of man? In all human affairs events arise in contradiction to the preconceived ends even of the wisest governors; they arise in no order of connexion, often without

any apparent cause, and still oftener in opposition to probable expectation ; and fortunate is he who can either apply the event to his preconceived purpose, or alter his purpose to suit the unexpected event. Can we in reason conceive that the supreme government of the universe is open to all these frustrations of purpose, or that the Almighty is a slave to contingencies and casual issue ? If not, if according to our notions of the Divine attributes, such uncertainty and confusion are inconsistent with the Divine government of the universe ; then must we suppose a perfect scheme and constitution of things to exist, with which every event is inseparably connected ; in which every circumstance, however trifling, bears its part as a furtherance of the grand and incomprehensible end of the whole : incomprehensible to all but that great Being who directs, controls, and governs every part at the same instant ; who can reduce contingency to method, and instability and chance to unfailing rule and order. There are those who would be willing enough to allow that all the more important events of the world are under the government and direction of God, but consider it below his majesty to condescend to all the trifling events of the life of man : to number the hairs of our head. Now, in addition to what I have said before, I would ask what line of distinction could the ingenuity of man devise between small events and great, which are, and which are not, under the cognizance of the Almighty ? Between perfection and imperfection there is no medium nor degree. If there is one event or one contingency

which defeats the design of the Almighty, and supplies not its link in the chain of order, then is the system and constitution of the whole imperfect, and unworthy the administration of a perfect Being. Since, therefore, it is necessary for the completion of a perfect system, that every part should be perfect, and supply the place allotted to it in reference to the order and design of the whole; it follows that every event in the universe must be under the direction of its moral Governor, who alone can so dispose them as, out of the seeming irregularity and confusion of all things here below, to produce that harmony and order which are the essential attributes of the nature and government of God. No consideration arising from the permission of evil, or the free will of man, can militate against this; as we have seen the one in innumerable instances the minister of God's unsearchable purposes; and the other, with all the difficulties attending its reconciliation with the foreknowledge of God, is essential to moral government; which cannot exist without previously supposing the existence of free moral agents. The necessity of reconciling these two apparently opposite qualities of prescience in the Almighty and free will in man, has exercised the ingenuity of man in proposing solutions of the difficulty. Perhaps the humility rather than the ingenuity of man would return the best answer to this intricate point, by confessing it one of the innumerable questions which are above the power of the human mind to answer or explain. "Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for us, we cannot attain unto it!"

But how they are reconciled, regards not the present question. It is enough for our immediate purpose to be assured, that there is no contingency which may arise from the exercise of man's uncontrolled power, that is not foreseen, provided against, and directed by that Great First Cause, which gave man the power he possesses, but, in giving him that power, provided fully for the free exercise of his own. If we exclude the doctrine of a special Providence from our belief, upon what shoals and quicksands of absurdity is our imagination driven, when it has abandoned that heavenly pilot who can alone direct us in safety through the storm. Shall we fly to chance; and what is that chance which is to direct the contingencies of this world? A name only and a shadow: it has itself no real being; it is nothing, and can do nothing; a mere word expressing our ignorance of predestinating causes; and if an efficient agent, then we create another self-existing being besides the Almighty, which is a declaration as impious as it is absurd. RENNELL.

THE CREDULITY OF DEISTS.

THERE is only one position, that the Revelation is not true, is a fable, is a lie, which will deliver men of an unchristian character from an unchristian destiny. Those who hold that position may hope for forgiveness, and trust in mercy to what extent they please, for they are sailing in a sea of darkness. The Deist may construct a god after his own wishes, to quiet his fears or indulge

his passion, or license his affections; to palliate adultery, murder, every vice and crime, as the ancient heathens did; and may run the chance of that idol of imagination holding good in the end. But for a believer in revealed truth to do the same, is first to give his belief the lie, and then to launch into the same sea of trust which the Deist doth. These Deists are always shedding sneers upon the Christian, because he believes. The Christian doth believe what he hath upon good evidence adopted. But what doth the Deist do? He believes that for which he hath no evidence at all; he takes God upon the credit of his own crude fancy; he rests his faith upon an invention of his brain, an invention framed out of a thousand incoherent thoughts suggested by limited and erroneous knowledge, and distorted by a thousand likings and dislikings, in no two minds akin. This creature, more deformed than sin, and more changeable than Proteus, the credulous Deist believes to be the living and true God. And if the man will be mad and act upon his dreams, he can take the folly and the shame that will come of such fatuity. But for the Christian to do so, who believes in the God of revelation, is the highest pitch of crime added to an equal amount of folly, and is not once to be endured. Hath not God first written himself upon tables of stone, then upon the countenance of his everlasting Son, then given varieties of the same in the renewed lives of his saints? This believing, we would erase all, and write him with the imagination of the natural mind, which knoweth of him nothing at all! Which is to dash the

tables of stone in pieces, to trample under foot the divinity of Christ, to give the lie to all his disciples who have evidenced him since, to give the lie to our own avowed belief, and do a thousand other inconsistent and wicked things which it is tedious to mention.

ON THE

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE OF RELIGION.

ALL the doctrines of the Gospel are practical principles. The word of God was not written, the Son of God was not incarnate, the Spirit of God was not given, only that Christians might obtain right views, and possess just notions. Religion is something more than mere correctness of intellect, justness of conception, and exactness of judgment. It is a life-giving principle; it must be infused into the habit, as well as govern in the understanding; it must regulate the will, as well as direct the creed. It must not only cast the opinions into a right frame, but the heart into a new mould. It is a transforming as well as a penetrating principle. It changes the tastes, gives activity to the inclinations, and, together with a new heart, produces a new life.

Christianity enjoins the same temper, the spirit, the same dispositions, on all its real professors. The act, the performance, must depend on circumstances which do not depend on us. The power of doing good is withheld from many, from whom, however, the reward will not be withheld. If the external act constituted the whole

value of Christian virtue, then must the author of all good be himself the author of injustice, by putting it out of the power of multitudes to fulfill his own commands. In principles, in temper, in fervent desires, in holy endeavours, consist the very essence of Christian duty.

Nor must we fondly attach ourselves to the practice of some particular virtue, or value ourselves exclusively on some favourite quality; nor must we wrap ourselves up in the performance of some individual actions, as if they formed the sum of Christian duty. But we must embrace the whole law of God in all its aspects, bearings, and relations. We must bring no fancies, no partialities, no prejudices, no exclusive choice or rejection into our religion; but take it as we find it, and obey it as we receive it, as it is exhibited in the Bible, without addition, curtailment, or adulteration:

Nor must we pronounce on a character by a single action really bad, or apparently good: if so, Peter's denial would render him the object of our execration, while we should have judged favourably of the prudent economy of Judas. The catastrophe of the latter, who does not know? while the other became a glorious martyr to that master whom, in a moment of infirmity, he had denied.

A piety altogether spiritual, disconnected with all outward circumstances; a religion of pure meditation and abstracted devotion, was not made for so compound, so imperfect a creature as man. There have, indeed, been a few sublime spirits, not "touched, but rapt," who, totally cut off

from the world, seem almost to have literally soared above the terrene region; who almost appear to have stolen the fire of the seraphim, and to have had no business on earth, but to keep alive the celestial flame. They would, however, have approximated more nearly to the example of their Divine Master, the great standard and only perfect model, had they combined a more diligent discharge of the active duties and beneficences of life with their high devotional attainments.

But while we are in little danger of imitating, let us not too harshly censure the pious error of these sublimated spirits. Their number is small; their example is not catching; their ethereal fire is not likely, by spreading, to inflame the world. The world will take due care not to come in contact with it; while its distant light and warmth may cast, accidentally, not an unuseful ray on the cold hearted and the worldly.

But from this small number of refined but inoperative beings we do not intend to draw our notions of practical piety. God did not make a religion for these few exceptions to the general state of the world, but for the world at large; for beings active, busy, restless; whose activity he, by his word, diverts into its proper channels; whose busy spirit is there directed to the common good; whose restlessness, indicating the unsatisfactoriness of all they find on earth, he points to a higher destination. Were total seclusion and abstraction designed to have been the general state of the world, God would have given men other laws, other rules, other faculties, and other employments.

There is a class of visionary but pious writers, who seem to shoot as far beyond the mark, as mere moralists fall short of it. Men of low views and gross minds may be said to be wise *below* what is written, while those of too subtile refinement are wise *above* it: the one grovels in the dust, from the inertness of their intellectual faculties; while the other are lost in the clouds, by stretching them beyond their appointed limits. The one build spiritual castles in the air, instead of erecting them on the "holy ground" of Scripture; the other lay their foundation in the sand, instead of resting it on the rock of ages. Thus the superstructure of both is equally unsound.

God is the fountain from which all the streams of goodness flow; the centre from which all the rays of blessedness diverge. All our actions are, therefore, only good, as they have a reference to him: the streams must revert back to their fountain, the rays must converge again to their centre.

If love of God be the governing principle, this powerful spring will actuate all the movements of the rational machine. The essence of religion does not so much consist in actions or affections. Though right actions, therefore, as, from an excess of courtesy, they are commonly termed, may be performed where there are no right affections; yet are they a mere carcass, utterly destitute of the soul, and, therefore, of the substance of virtue. But neither can affections substantially and truly subsist without producing right actions; for never let it be forgotten that a pious inclination, which has not life and vigour sufficient to

ripen into act, when the occasion presents itself, and a right action which does not grow out of a sound principle, will neither of them have any place in account of real goodness. A good inclination will be contrary to sin; but a mere inclination will not subdue sin.

The love of God, as it is the source of every right action and feeling, so it is the only principle which necessarily involves the love of our fellow creatures. As man, we do not love man. There is a partiality, but not of benevolence; of sensibility, but not of philanthropy; of friends and favourites, of parties and societies, but not of man collectively. It is true we may, and do, without this principle, relieve his distresses; but we do not bear with his faults. We may promote his fortune, but we do not forgive his offences; above all, we are not anxious for his immortal interests. We could not see him want without pain, but we can see him sin without emotion. We could not hear of a beggar perishing at our door without horror; but we can, without concern, witness an acquaintance dying without repentance. Is it not strange that we must participate something of the divine nature, before we can really love the human? It seems, indeed, to be an insensibility to sin, rather than want of benevolence to mankind, that makes us naturally pity their temporal, and be careless of their spiritual wants: but does not this very insensibility proceed from the want of love to God?

MISS H. MORE,

THE

HAPPY EFFECTS OF GENERAL PIETY.

It is an observation, very frequently made, that there is more tranquillity and satisfaction diffused through the inhabitants of uncultivated and savage countries, than is to be met with in nations filled with wealth and plenty, polished with civility, and governed by laws. It is found happy to be free from contention, though that exemption be obtained by having nothing to contend for; and an equality of condition, though that condition be far from eligible, conduces more to the peace of society than an established and legal subordination, in which every man is perpetually endeavouring to exalt himself to the rank above him, though by degrading others already in possession of it; and every man exerting his efforts to hinder his inferiors from rising to the level with himself. It appears that it is better to have no property, than to be in perpetual apprehensions of fraudulent artifices, or open invasions; and that the security arising from a regular administration of government is not equal to that which is produced by the absence of ambition, envy, or discontent.

Thus pleasing is the prospect of savage countries, merely from the ignorance of vice, even without the knowledge of virtue; thus happy are they, amidst all the hardships and distresses that attend a state of nature, because they are, in a great measure, free from those which men bring upon one another.

But a community, in which virtue should generally prevail, of which every member should fear God with his whole heart, and love his neighbour as himself, where every man should labour to make himself "perfect, even as his Father which is in heaven is perfect," and endeavour, with his utmost diligence, to imitate the divine justice and benevolence, would have no reason to envy those nations whose quiet is the effect of their ignorance.

If we consider it with regard to public happiness, it would be opulent without luxury, and powerful without faction; its counsels would be steady, because they would be just; and its efforts vigorous, because they would be united. The governors would have nothing to fear from the turbulence of the people, nor the people any thing to apprehend from the ambition of their governors. The encroachments of foreign enemies they could not always avoid, but would certainly repulse, for scarce any civilized nation has been ever enslaved till it was first corrupted.

With regard to private men, not only that happiness, which necessarily descends to particulars from the public prosperity, would be enjoyed; but even those blessings, which constitute the felicity of domestic life, and are less closely connected with the general good. Every man would be industrious to improve his property, because he would be in no danger of seeing his improvements torn from him. Every man would assist his neighbour, because he would be certain of receiving assistance if he should himself be attacked by necessity. Every man would endea-

your after merit, because merit would always be rewarded. Every tie of friendship and relation would add to happiness, because it would not be subject to be broken by envy, rivalry, or suspicion. Children would honour their parents, because all parents would be virtuous ; all parents would love their children, because all children would be obedient. The grief which we naturally feel at the death of those that are dear to us, could not, perhaps, be wholly prevented, but would be much more moderate than in the present state of things, because no man could ever want a friend, and his loss would, therefore, be less, because his grief, like his other passions, would be regulated by his duty. Even the relations of subjection would produce no uneasiness, because insolence would be separated from power, and discontent from inferiority. Difference of opinions would never disturb this community, because every man would dispute for truth alone, look upon the ignorance of others with compassion, and reclaim them from their errors with tenderness and modesty. Persecution would not be heard of among them, because there would be no pride on one side, nor obstinacy on the other. Disputes about property would seldom happen, because no man would grow rich by injuring another ; and when they did happen, they would be quickly terminated, because each party would be equally desirous of a just sentence. All care and solicitude would be almost banished from this happy region, because no man would either have false friends or public enemies. The immoderate desire of riches would be extinguished where

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there was no vanity to be gratified. The fear of poverty would be dispelled, where there was no man suffered to want what was necessary to his support, or proportioned to his deserts. Such would be the state of a community generally virtuous, and this happiness would probably be derived to future generations; since the earliest impressions would be in favour of virtue, since those, to whom the care of education should be committed, would make themselves venerable by the observation of their own precepts, and the minds of the young and unexperienced would not be tainted with false notions, nor their conduct influenced by bad examples.

Such is the state at which any community may arrive by the general practice of the duties of religion. And can Providence be accused of cruelty or negligence, when such happiness as this is within our power? Can man be said to have received his existence as a punishment, or a curse, when he may attain such a state as this; when even this is only preparatory to greater happiness, and the same course of life will secure him from misery, both in this world and in a future state?

Let no man charge this prospect of things with being a train of airy phantoms; a visionary scene; with which a gay imagination may be amused in solitude and ease, but which the first survey of the world will show him to be nothing more than a pleasing delusion. Nothing has been mentioned which would not certainly be produced in any nation by a general piety. To effect all this, no miracle is required; men need only unite their

endeavours, and exert those abilities which God has conferred upon them, in conformity to the laws of religion.

To general happiness, indeed, is required a general concurrence in virtue ; but we are not to delay the amendment of our own lives, in expectation of this favourable juncture. A universal reformation must be begun somewhere, and every man ought to be ambitious of being the first. He that does not promote it, retards it ; for every one must, by his conversation, do either good or hurt. Let every man, therefore, endeavour to make the world happy, by a strict performance of his duty to God and man, and the mighty work will soon be accomplished. JOHNSON.

WORLDLY ZEAL CONTRASTED WITH RELIGIOUS.

OUR blessed Master has observed, that “ the children of this world are in their generation *wiser* than the children of light.” It may be said, with equal truth, that they have generally more zeal, more fortitude, more patience, and perseverance. There is not a votary of wealth, pleasure, power, or fame, who cannot, and who does not, upon occasion, practise a self-denial which few Christians can be prevailed upon to practise in a much better cause ; a self-denial more severe and rigid indeed than they are often called upon to practise.

For the sake of collecting what is never to be

used, and adding to his beloved heap, the miser will forego the comforts, the conveniences, and almost the necessities of existence, and voluntarily submit all his days to the penances and austerities of a mendicant.

The discipline of a life in fashion is by no means of the mildest kind; and it is common to meet with those who complain of being worn down and ready to sink under it. But how can they help it? What can they do? They are driven and compelled to it; they are fast bound by the adamant chains of a necessity—not philosophical indeed—but one equally inexorable and irresistible.

Consider the vigils and abstinence of the gamester. To discharge with propriety the duties of his profession, it is expedient that he keep his habit cool, and his head clear. His diet is therefore almost as spare as that of St. John in the wilderness, and he drinks neither wine nor strong drink; lest, instead of his cheating his friend, his friend should cheat him.

Consider the toil and the fatigue willingly undergone by one whose delight is placed in the sports of the field and the pleasures of the chase. How early does he rise! How late is he abroad! "In hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and rain. None of these things move, neither counts he his life dear unto himself," being well content often to put it to the extremest hazard.

Look at the aspirant to power: he wears a countenance always suited to the present occasion. No symptom of inward uneasiness is suffered to appear in it. He holds his passions in the most

absolute subjection. "Hitherto (says he to every one of them) shalt thou come, but no further." He takes patiently and cheerfully affronts and insults. He bears and forbears. Can the Stoic, can the inhabitant of la Trappe do more? Exemplary instances of mortification and self-denial are not confined to the desert or the cloister. They may be found in a court.

How often does the candidate for literary fame pursue his proposition, or his problem, or his system, regardless of food and rest, till his eyes fail, his nerves are shattered, his spirits are exhausted, and his health is gone! But greater things than these are still behind.

At the call of honour, a young man of family and fortune, accustomed to the gratifications of the table, and a life of ease and voluptuousness, quits every valuable and tender connection at home, and submits at once to all the painful duties and hard fare of a camp, in an enemy's country. He travels through dreary swamps and inhospitable forests, guided only by the track of savages. He traverses mountains, he passes and repasses rivers, and marches several hundred miles with scarcely bread to eat, or change of raiment to put on. When night comes, he sleeps on the ground, or perhaps sleeps not at all; and at the dawn of day resumes his labour. At length, he is so unfortunate as to find his enemy. He braves death, amid all the horrors of the field. He sees his companions fall around him—he is wounded, and carried into a tent, or laid in a waggon; where he is left to suffer pain and anguish, with the noise of destruction sounding in

his ears. After some weeks he recovers, and enters afresh upon duty. And does the Captain of thy salvation, O thou who stylest thyself the soldier and servant of Jesus Christ—does he require any thing like this at thy hands? Or canst thou deem him an austere Master, because thou art enjoined to live in sobriety and purity, to subdue a turbulent passion, to watch an hour sometimes unto prayer, or to miss a meal now and then during the season of repentance and humiliation? Blush for shame, and hide thy face in the dust.

BISHOP HORNE.

OF SUPERSTITION.

It were better to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of him; for the one is unbelief, the other is contumely: and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose: "Surely," saith he, "I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such a man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say there was one Plutarch, that would eat his children as soon as they were born;" as the poets speak of Saturn: and, as the contumely is greater towards God; so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation: all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men: therefore atheism did never perturb states; for it

makes men wary of themselves, as looking no farther, and we see the times inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Cæsar) were civil times ; but superstition hath been the confusion of many states, and bringeth in a new " *primum mobile*," that ravisheth all the spheres of government. The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools ; and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order. It was gravely said, by some of the prelates in the council of Trent, where the doctrine of the schoolmen bare great sway, that the schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics and epicycles, and such engines of orbs, to save the phænomena, though they knew there were no such things ; and, in like manner, that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtile and intricate axioms and theorems, to save the practice of the church. The causes of superstition are pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies ; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness ; over great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the church ; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre ; the favouring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties ; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations : and, lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters. Superstition, without a veil, is a deformed thing ; for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed : and, as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms

and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go farthest from the superstition formerly received ; therefore care should be had that (as it fareth in ill purgings) the good be not taken away with the bad, which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.

BACON.

OF THE

NATURAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY.

It is an immense conclusion, that there is a God ; a perceiving, intelligent, designing Being ; at the head of creation, and from whose will it proceeded. The *attributes* of such a Being, suppose his reality to be proved, must be adequate to the magnitude, extent, and multiplicity of his operations ; which are not only vast beyond comparison with those performed by any other power ; but, so far as respects our conceptions of them, infinite, because they are unlimited on all sides.

Yet the contemplation of a nature so exalted, however surely we arrive at the proof of its existence, overwhelms our faculties. The mind feels its powers sink under the subject. One consequence of which is, that from painful abstraction the thoughts seek relief in sensible images. Whence may be deduced the ancient, and almost universal propensity to idolatrous substitutions. They are the resources of a labouring imagination. False religions usually fall in with the

natural propensity ; true religions, or such as have derived themselves from the true, resist it.

It is one of the advantages of the revelations which we acknowledge, that, whilst they reject idolatry with its many pernicious accompaniments, they introduce the Deity to human apprehension, under an idea more personal, more determinate, more within its compass, than the theology of nature can do. And this they do by representing him exclusively under the relation in which he stands to ourselves ; and, for the most part, under some precise character, resulting from that relation, or from the history of his providences : which method suits the span of our intellects much better than the universality which enters into the idea of God, as deduced from the views of nature. When, therefore, these representations are well founded in point of authority (for all depends upon that), they afford a condescension to the state of our faculties, of which, they who have most reflected on the subject, will be the first to acknowledge the want and the value.

Nevertheless, if we be careful to imitate the documents of our religion, by confining our explanations to what concerns ourselves, and do not affect more precision in our ideas than the subject allows of, the several terms which are employed to denote the attributes of the Deity, may be made, even in natural religion, to bear a sense consistent with truth and reason, and not surpassing our comprehension.

These terms are ; Omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, self-existence, necessary existence, spirituality.

“ Omnipotence,” “ omniscience,” “ infinite” power, “ infinite” knowledge, are *superlatives*; expressing our conception of these attributes in the strongest and most elevated terms which language supplies. We ascribe power to the Deity under the name of “ omnipotence,” the strict and correct conclusion being, that a power which could create such a world as this is, must be, beyond all comparison, greater than any which we experience in ourselves, than any which we observe in other visible agents; greater also than any which we can want, for our individual protection and preservation, in the Being upon whom we depend. It is a power, likewise, to which we are not authorized, by our observation or knowledge, to assign any limits of space or duration.

Very much of the same sort of remark is applicable to the term “ omniscience,” infinite knowledge, or infinite wisdom. In strictness of language, there is a difference between knowledge and wisdom; wisdom always supposing action, and action directed by it. With respect to the first, viz. *knowledge*, the Creator must know, intimately, the constitution and properties of the things which he created; which seems also to imply a foreknowledge of their action upon one another, and of their changes; at least, so far as the same result from trains of physical and necessary causes. His omniscience also, as far as respects things present, is deducible from his nature, as an intelligent being, joined with the extent, or rather the universality, of his operations. Where he acts, he is; and where he is,

he perceives. The *wisdom* of the Deity, as testified in the works of creation, surpasses all idea we have of wisdom, drawn from the highest intellectual operations of the highest class of intelligent beings with whom we are acquainted ; and, which is of the chief importance to us, whatever be its compass or extent, which it is evidently impossible that we should be able to determine, it must be adequate to the conduct of that order of things under which we live. And this is enough. It is of very inferior consequence, by what terms we express our notion, or rather our admiration, of this attribute. The terms, which the piety and the usage of language have rendered habitual to us, may be as proper as any other. We can trace this attribute much beyond what is necessary for any conclusion to which we have occasion to apply it. The degree of knowledge and power requisite for the formation of created nature, cannot, with respect to us, be distinguished from infinite.

The Divine “omnipresence” stands, in natural theology, upon this foundation :—In every part and place of the universe with which we are acquainted, we perceive the exertion of a power, which we believe, mediately, or immediately, to proceed from the Deity. For instance ; in what part or point of space, that has ever been explored, do we not discover attraction ? In what regions do we not find light ? In what accessible portion of our globe do we not meet with gravity, magnetism, electricity ; together with the properties also and powers of organized substances, of vegetable or of animated nature ? Nay, farther, we

may ask, What kingdom is there of nature, what corner of space, in which there is any thing that can be examined by us, where we do not fall upon contrivance and design? The only reflection, perhaps, which arises in our minds from this view of the world around is, that the laws of nature everywhere prevail; that they are uniform and universal. But what do we mean by the laws of nature, or by any law? Effects are produced by power, not by laws. A law cannot execute itself. A law refers us to an agent. Now an agency so general, as that we cannot discover its absence, or assign the place in which some effect of its continued energy is not found, may, in popular language at least, and, perhaps, without much deviation from philosophical strictness, be called universal: and, with not quite the same, but with no inconsiderable propriety, the Person, or Being, in whom that power resides, or from whom it is derived, may be taken to be *omnipresent*. He who upholds all things by his power, may be said to be everywhere present.

This is called a virtual presence. There is also what metaphysicians denominate an essential ubiquity; and which idea the language of Scripture seems to favour: but the former, I think, goes as far as natural theology carries us.

“Eternity” is a negative idea, clothed with a positive name. It supposes, in that to which it is applied, a present existence; and is the negation of a beginning or an end of that existence. As applied to the Deity, it has not been controverted by those who acknowledge a Deity at all. Most assuredly, there never was a time in which nothing

existed, because that condition must have continued. The universal *blank* must have remained ; nothing could rise up out of it ; nothing could ever have existed since ; nothing could exist now. In strictness, however, we have no concern with duration prior to that of the visible world. Upon this article therefore of theology, it is sufficient to know that the contriver necessarily existed before the contrivance.

“Self-existence” is another negative idea, viz. the negation of a preceding cause, as of a progenitor, a maker, an author, a creator.

“Necessary existence” means demonstrable existence.

“Spirituality” expresses an idea, made up of a negative part, and of a positive part. The negative part consists in the exclusion of some of the known properties of matter, especially of solidity, of the *vis inertiae*, and of gravitation. The positive part comprises perception, thought, will, power, *action* ; by which last term is meant the origination of motion ; the quality, perhaps, in which resides the essential superiority of spirit over matter, “which cannot move, unless it be moved ; and cannot but move when impelled by another*.” I apprehend that there can be no difficulty in applying to the Deity both parts of this idea.

PALEY.

* Bishop Wilkins's Principles of Natural Religion, p. 106.

THE
STRANGENESS OF A DIVINE MANIFESTATION,
No Argument against its Occurrence.

It appears incredible to many, that God Almighty should have had colloquial intercourse with our first parents; that he should have contracted a kind of friendship for the patriarchs, and entered into covenant with them; that he should have suspended the laws of nature in Egypt; should have been so apparently partial as to become the God and Governor of one particular nation; and should have so far demeaned himself as to give to that people a burthensome ritual of worship, statutes and ordinances, many of which seem to be beneath the dignity of his attention, unimportant and impolitic. I have conversed with many deists, and have always found that the strangeness of these things was the only reason for their disbelief of them: nothing similar has happened in their time; they will not, therefore, admit that these events have really taken place at any time. As well might a child, when arrived at a state of manhood, contend that he had never either stood in need or experienced the fostering care of a mother's kindness, the wearisome attention of his nurse, or the instruction and discipline of his schoolmaster. The Supreme Being selected one family from an idolatrous world; nursed it up, by various acts of his providence, into a great nation; communicated to that nation a knowledge of his holiness, justice, mercy, power, and wisdom;

disseminated them at various times through every part of the earth, that they might be "a leaven to leaven the whole lump," that they might assure all other nations of the existence of one supreme God, the creator and preserver of the world, the only proper object of adoration. With what reason can we expect that what was done to one nation, not out of any partiality to them, but for the general good, should be done to all? That the mode of instruction, which was suited to the infancy of the world, should be extended to the maturity of its manhood, or to the imbecility of its old age? I own to you, that when I consider how nearly man, in a savage state, approaches to the brute creation, as to intellectual excellence; and when I contemplate his miserable attainments as to the knowledge of God, in a civilized state, when he has had no divine instruction on the subject, or when that instruction has been forgotten (for all men have known something of God from tradition), I cannot but admire the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being, in having let himself down to our apprehensions; in having given to mankind in the earliest ages sensible and extraordinary proofs of his existence and attributes; in having made the Jewish and Christian dispensations mediums to convey to all men, through all ages, that knowledge concerning himself, which he had vouchsafed to give immediately to the first. I own it is strange, very strange, that he should have made an immediate manifestation of himself in the first ages of the world; but what is there that is not strange? It is strange that you and I are here—that there is

water, and earth, and air, and fire—that there is a sun, and moon, and stars—that there is generation, corruption, reproduction. I can account ultimately for none of these things, without recurring to him who made every thing. I also am his workmanship, and look up to him with hope of preservation through all eternity; I adore him for his word as well as for his work; his work I cannot comprehend, but his word hath assured me of all that I am concerned to know—that he hath prepared everlasting happiness for those who love and obey him. This you will call preachment:—I will have done with it; but the subject is so vast, and the plan of Providence, in my opinion, so obviously wise and good, that I can never think of it without having my mind filled with piety, admiration, and gratitude.

BISHOP WATSON.

DANGER OF DEFERRING REPENTANCE.

THAT the Almighty will accept the late resolutions of a deathbed repentance is more than any one in his own case can presume to say. On this difficult and dangerous point, thus much we may be warranted to conclude, that if it should fail, it will fail most probably in the case of those who have rested their dependance most upon it. They that sin in hope of final repentance often sin so far as to be incapable of it when their hour approaches. Their consciences by degrees are hardened, and not to be touched by those soft impressions which in their early

career they felt from the languishing remains of grace. Are they sure that they can command those few moments on which eternity depends? How often when they lie down upon a sick bed, do they want both the will and the power to ask forgiveness? Are they sure that their promised repentance will bring any thing in its train but horror and despair? Are they sure that their reason will not, in the extremity of disease, forsake them? or, should that remain, are they sure that it will not prove their severe and relentless judge, showing them the opportunities which they have neglected, the mercies they have despised, and anticipating the terrors of a future judgment? Thus restless and uneasy, thus void of comfort, and debarred from hope, without confidence to ask pardon, without faith to receive it, man, under these circumstances, descends to the receptacle of all flesh in the horrors of guilty despair.

What then remains, but to embrace the offers of mercy, whilst mercy remains sure; "for the night cometh in which no man can work." A night of darkness and tribulation, which may overwhelm the sinner in the midst of iniquities, without offering him even a chance of a doubtful and dangerous repentance. The time cometh, and, O Lord, who may abide its coming! While health and strength remain, the season of mercy still shines upon us; but how long that season shall last man cannot know. When the opportunity of repentance is gone, the season of mercy is gone also. And how soon to every man among us this ray of heavenly light may set in dark-

ness, who can tell? This night, thy soul may be required of thee; this night the faculties of thy mind may be destroyed; this night the season of mercy may be for ever closed; and "in the grave there is neither wisdom nor device;" no power of forgiveness, nor hopes of pardon—there our doom is sealed for ever.

Viewing then the extent of the mercy of God, in respect to the season of acceptance, as involved in necessary obscurity, let not man complain of the indefinity of pardon, or of the uncertainty of his destiny;—the nature of it is clear, the terms are definite, and as far as relates to himself, the extent is clear also. Can we look for greater precision? At this moment is the mercy of God offered to every one who hears me, on the terms of repentance from sin, by the blood of his Redeemer. At this moment, are the ears of the Lord open to the prayers of the contrite sinner. At this moment, is the Holy Spirit ready to invigorate every effort, and to animate every hope. Shall we then complain because we know not how often this gracious offer may be repeated, or how soon it may be finally withdrawn? Shall we murmur that we cannot indulge ourselves in the pollutions of sin, with the full security of future mercy? Such a complaint is an insult to the divine attributes; it is trifling with God.

RENNELL.

ON THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

SUCH is the commencement of the history of mankind ; an era, to which we must ever look back with solemn awe and veneration. Before the sun and moon had begun their course ; before the sound of the human voice was heard, or the name of man was known ; “ in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.”——To a beginning of the world, we are led back by every thing that now exists ; by all history, all records, all monuments of antiquity. In tracing the transactions of past ages, we arrive at a period which clearly indicates the infancy of the human race. We behold the world peopled by degrees. We ascend to the origin of all those useful and necessary arts without the knowledge of which mankind could hardly subsist. We discern society and civilization arising from rude beginnings in every corner of the earth ; and gradually advancing to the state in which we now find them : all which afford plain evidence that there was a period when mankind began to inhabit and cultivate the earth. What is very remarkable, the most authentic chronology and history of most nations coincides with the account of Scripture ; and makes the period during which the world has been inhabited by the race of men not to extend beyond six thousand years.

To the ancient philosophers, creation from nothing appeared an unintelligible idea. They maintained the eternal existence of matter, which they supposed to be modelled by the sovereign

mind of the universe into the form which the earth now exhibits. But there is nothing in this opinion which gives it any title to be opposed to the authority of Revelation. The doctrine of two self-existent independent principles, God and matter, the one active, the other passive, is an hypothesis which presents difficulties to human reason at least as great as the creation of matter from nothing. Adhering then to the testimony of Scripture, we believe that "in the beginning God created," or from nonexistence brought into being "the heaven and the earth."

But though there was a period when this globe, with all that we see upon it, did not exist, we have no reason to think that the wisdom and power of the Almighty were then without exercise or employment. Boundless is the extent of his dominion. Other globes and worlds, enlightened by other suns, may then have occupied, they still appear to occupy, the immense regions of space. Numberless orders of beings, to us unknown, people the wide extent of the universe, and afford an endless variety of objects to the ruling care of the great Father of all. At length in the course and progress of his government there arrived a period when this earth was to be called into existence. When the signal moment predestined from all eternity was come, the Deity arose in his might; and with a word created the world.—What an illustrious moment was that when from nonexistence there sprang at once into being this mighty globe on which so many millions of creatures now dwell!—No preparatory measures were required. No long circuit of means was

employed. "He spake; and it was done: He commanded; and it stood fast." The earth was at first, "without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The Almighty surveyed the dark abyss; and fixed bounds to the several divisions of nature. He said, "Let there be light; and there was light." Then appeared the sea and the dry land. The mountains rose: and the rivers flowed. The sun and moon began their course in the skies. Herbs and plants clothed the ground. The air, the earth, and the waters were stored with their respective inhabitants. At last, man was made after the image of God. He appeared walking with countenance erect; and received his Creator's benediction as the Lord of this new world. The Almighty beheld his work when it was finished; and pronounced it good. Superior beings saw with wonder this new accession to existence. "The morning stars sang together; and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

BLAIR.

THE FATHERLY GOODNESS OF GOD.

BUT instead of leaving us to ourselves, or thus entreating us after sovereignty, either of power or of wisdom, mark how he hath actually proceeded, He presents himself as our Father, who first breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, and ever since hath nourished and brought us up as children:—who prepared the earth for our habitation; and for our sakes made its womb to teem with food, and beauty and life.—For our sakes

no less he garnished the heavens and created the whole host of them with the breath of his mouth, bringing the sun forth from his chamber every morning, with the joy of his bridegroom and a giant's strength, to shed his cheerful light over the face of creation, and draw blooming life from the cold bosom of the ground.—From him also was derived the wonderful workmanship of our frames—the eye, in whose small orb of beauty is pencilled the whole of heaven and of earth, for the mind to peruse and know and possess and rejoice over, even as if the whole universe were her own—the ear in whose vocal chambers are entertained harmonious numbers, the melody of rejoicing nature, the welcomes and salutations of friends, the whisperings of love, the voices of parents and of children, with all the sweetness that resideth in the tongue of man.—His also is the gift of the beating heart, flooding all the hidden recesses of the human frame with the tide of life—his the cunning of the hand, whose workmanship turns rude and raw materials to pleasant forms and wholesome uses,—his the whole vital frame of man, a world of wonders within itself, a world of bounty, and, if rightly used, a world of finest enjoyments.—His also the mysteries of the soul within—the judgment, which weighs in a balance all contending thoughts, extracting wisdom out of folly, and extricating order out of confusion; the memory, recorder of the soul, in whose books are chronicled the accidents of the changing world, and the fluctuating moods of the mind itself; fancy, the eye of the soul, which scales the heavens and circles round the verge and circuits

of all possible existence ; hope, the purveyor of happiness, which peoples the hidden future with brighter forms and happier accidents than ever possessed the present, offering to the soul the foretaste of every joy ; affection, the nurse of joy, whose full bosom can cherish a thousand objects without being impoverished, but rather replenished, a storehouse inexhaustible towards the brotherhood and sisterhood of this earth, as the storehouse of God is inexhaustible to the universal world ; finally, conscience, the arbitrator of the soul, and the touchstone of the evil and the good, whose voice within our breast is the echo of the voice of God.—These, all these, whose varied action and movement constitutes the maze of thought, the mystery of life, the continuous chain of being—God hath given us to know that we hold of his hand, and during his pleasure, and out of the fulness of his care. IRVING.

ON THE

INSTABILITY OF EARTHLY THINGS.

THE moon is incessantly varying, either in her aspect or her stages. Sometimes she looks full upon us, and her visage is all lustre. Sometimes she appears in profile, and shows us only half her enlightened face. Anon, a radiant crescent but just adorns her brow. Soon it dwindles into a slender streak : till, at length, all her beauty vanishes, and she becomes a beamless orb. Sometimes she rises with the descending day, and be-

gins her procession amidst admiring multitudes. Ere long, she defers her progress till the midnight watches, and steals unobserved upon the sleeping world. Sometimes she just enters the edges of the western horizon, and drops us a ceremonious visit. Within a while, she sets out on her nightly tour from the opposite regions of the east; traverses the whole hemisphere, and never offers to withdraw, till the more refulgent partner of her sway renders her presence unnecessary. In a word, she is, while conversant among us, still waxing or waning, and “never continueth in one stay.”

Such is the moon, and such are all sublunary things exposed to perpetual vicissitudes. How often and how soon have the faint echoes of renown slept in silence, or been converted into the clamours of obloquy! The same lips, almost with the same breath, cry, Hosanna and Crucify!—Have not riches confessed their notorious treachery a thousand and a thousand times? Either melting away like snow in our hands, by insensible degrees, or escaping, like a winged prisoner from its cage, with a precipitate flight. Have we not known the bridegroom’s closet an antichamber to the tomb; and heard the voice which so lately pronounced the sparkling pair husband and wife, proclaim an everlasting divorce? and seal the decree, with that solemn asseveration, “Ashes to ashes, dust to dust!”—Our friends, though the medicine of life; our health, though the balm of nature, are a most precarious possession. How soon may the first become a corpse in our arms; and how easily is

the last destroyed in its vigour!—You have seen, no doubt, a set of pretty painted birds perching on your trees, or sporting in your meadows. You were pleased with the lovely visitants, that brought beauty on their wings, and melody in their throats. But could you insure the continuance of this agreeable entertainment? No, truly. At the least disturbing noise, at the least terrifying appearance, they start from their seats; they mount the skies, and are gone in an instant, are gone for ever. Would you choose to have a happiness which bears date with their arrival, and expires at their departure? If you could not be content with a portion, enjoyable only through such a fortuitous term, not of years, but of moments, O! take up with nothing earthly; set your affections on things above; there alone is “no variableness or shadow of turning.”

HERVEY.

THE
WORLD AND THE GOSPEL CONTRASTED.

BUT it may be said, Is the Gospel then that austere and gloomy system that commands us to renounce enjoyments naturally arising from social intercourse? No, my brethren; religion, being founded on benevolence, cannot be the enemy to any gratification that innocently contributes to the happiness of life. St. Paul expressly directs Christians to rejoice with those that rejoice, as well as weep with them that weep; and Jesus Christ himself, we know, was seated at the table

of the Pharisee, and sanctified by his presence the marriage feast of Cana. But we are not to confound what our rule clearly admits with what the temper of the world would suppose it to admit. Though it may, in a degree, lead to repetition, I will submit the difference in a word. Never to appear in society, but with a view to improvement and edification; never to keep up a single acquaintance the most distantly dangerous to our spiritual intercourse; never to cultivate friends, or even relatives, that are not religious and virtuous; never omit rendering, in the particular duties of our station, the means of salvation to ourselves and others: this is the *Gospel*. To neglect occupations the most sacred and important; to run indiscreetly, and without choice, into every circle that will admit us; to consume our precious time in idle visits and ceremonials; to live only in the confusion of night and day, amidst laborious amusements, that always end in inevitable disgust, that capital enemy, which we are eternally banishing and eternally calling up: this is the *World*. Inviolably to respect our superfluities as the patrimony of the poor; to be distinguished in high station, neither by too much magnificence nor too much simplicity, to regulate our train and expense invariably below our rank and revenues; to think more of decency than of lustre and show: this is the *Gospel*. To be swayed in those things, only by established fashion, however wild, extravagant, and contemptible; to labour who shall outdo the other in excessive and luxurious entertainments; to starve a family for a month in order to glitter for a night; to

exhibit with study and affectation brilliant and expensive baubles on the person, and the person without attire; and unthinkingly sacrifice to all vanity what our hearts incline us to devote to a more sacred purpose: this is the *World*. To take part in conversations only in which modesty has never to blush, in which reason has every thing to gain, and the sacred cause of religion and morality finds edification and support: this is the *Gospel*. To relish unintelligible jargon of mixed and tumultuous assemblies; to endeavour in all conversations rather to shine than to instruct; to high season it with the salt of sarcasm or slander; delicately and artificially to envelope the poison of impurity and corruption; to be silent from self-interest or complaisance, when religion is reviled by the impious and libertine; perhaps, infamously join in the abuse of what we inwardly revere: this is the *World*. Never to engage in play, but on a scale the most moderate; or consider that, or any other allowable relaxation, but as the means of returning with recruited spirits to the performance of every social, public, and domestic duty: this is the *Gospel*. To render play an occupation and a traffic; a blind ungovernable passion, that lays us open to the arts and conspiracies of the more trained in the profession, that fills the soul with base and malignant affections, the feelings of avarice, the bitterness of envy; the rage that boils at loss and disappointment; nightly to grope for an object that engrosses every reflection of the mind, and every desire of the heart; that every instant, under the capricious empire of chance, produces

miserable shiftings of ecstasy and pain, and, under the law of polite manners, commands the torment of outward ease and countenance serene, when the storm is most violent and afflicting within: this is the *World*. This is one of those precious pursuits to which it eagerly recurs for enjoyment, and would reconcile with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is unnecessary to pursue the contrast any farther.

KIRWAN.

THE WORLDLY MINDED MAN.

A MAN absorbed in a multitude of secular concerns, decent but unawakened, listens with a kind of respectful insensibility to the overtures of religion. He considers the church as venerable from her antiquity, and important from her connexion with the state. No one is more alive to her political, nor more dead to her spiritual importance. He is anxious for her existence, but indifferent to her doctrines. These he considers as a general matter, in which he has no individual concern. He considers religious observances as something decorous but unreal; as a grave custom made respectable by public usage and long prescription. He admits that the poor who have little to enjoy, and the idle who have little to do, cannot do better than make over to God that time which cannot be turned to a more profitable account. Religion, he thinks, may properly enough employ leisure, and occupy old age. But though both advance towards himself with imperceptible step, he is still at a loss to deter-

mine the precise period when the leisure is sufficient, or the age enough advanced. It recedes as the destined season approaches. He continues to intend moving, but he continues to stand still.

Compare his drowsy sabbaths with the animation of the days of business, you would not think it was the same man. The one are to be got over, the others are enjoyed. He goes from the dull decencies, the shadowy forms, for such they are to him, of public worship, to the solid realities of his worldly concerns, to the cheerful activities of secular life. These he considers as bounden, almost as exclusive duties. The others indeed may not be wrong; but these he is sure are right. The world is his element. Here he breathes freely his native air. Here he is substantially engaged. Here his whole mind is alive; his understanding broad awake; all his energies are in full play; his mind is all alacrity; his faculties are employed; his capacities are filled; here they have an object worthy of their widest expansion. Here his desires and affections are absorbed. The faint impression of the Sunday's sermon fades away, to be as faintly revived on the Sunday following, again to fade in the succeeding week. To the sermon he brings a formal ceremonious attendance; to the world he brings all his heart and soul and mind and strength. To the one he resorts in conformity to law and custom: to induce him to resort to the other, he wants no law, no sanction, no invitation, no argument. His will is of the party. His passions are volunteers. The visible things

of heaven are clouded in shadow, are lost in distance. The world is lord of the ascendant. Riches, honour, power, fill his mind with brilliant images. They are present, they are certain, they are tangible; they assume form and bulk. In these, therefore, he cannot be mistaken; in the others he may. The eagerness of competition, the struggle for superiority, the perturbations of ambition fill his mind with an emotion, his soul with an agitation, his affections with an interest, which, though very unlike happiness, he yet flatters himself is the road to it. This factitious pleasure, this tumultuous feeling, produces, at least, that negative satisfaction of which he is constantly in search—it keeps him from himself.

Even in circumstances where there is no success to present a very tempting bait, the mere occupation, the crowd of objects, the succession of engagements, the mingling pursuits, the very tumult and hurry, have their gratifications. The bustle gives false peace by leaving no leisure for reflection. He lays his conscience asleep with the “flattering unction” of good intentions. He comforts himself with the creditable pretence of want of time, and the vague resolution of giving up to God the dregs of that life, of the vigorous season of which he thinks the world more worthy. Thus commuting with his Maker, his life wears away, its close draws near—and even the poor commutation which was promised is not made. The assigned hour of retreat either never arrives, or if it does arrive, sloth and sensuality are resorted to as the fair reward of a life of

labour and anxiety ; and whether he dies in the protracted pursuits of wealth, or in the enjoyment of the luxuries it has earned, he dies in the trammels of the world.

MISS H. MORE.

ON RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF PROVIDENCE.

It is too common for persons who are perfectly convinced of the duty of patience and cheerful resignation under great and severe trials, in which the hand of Providence is plainly seen, to let themselves grow fretful and plaintive under little vexations and slight disappointments, as if their submission in one case gave them a right to rebel in another : as if there was something meritorious in the greater sufferings, that gave them a claim to full indulgence in every trifling wish of their heart ; and, accordingly, they will set their hearts most violently upon little reliefs and amusements, and complain and pity themselves grievously if they are at any time denied.

All this is building on a false foundation : the same gracious Providence, that sends *real* afflictions only for our good, will, we may be absolutely sure, afford us such supports and reliefs under them as are needful and fit ; but it will not accommodate itself to our idle humour.

To be happy, we must depend for our happiness on him alone who is able to give it : we must not lean on human props of any kind ; though when granted us, we may thankfully

accept and make use of them; but always with caution, not to lay so much weight upon them, as that the reed, broken under our hand, may go into it and pierce it.

On the loss of a friend, we must not say, *This* and *that* person, *this* and *that* amusement shall be my relief and support; but—To Providence I must submit—Providence will support me in what way it sees proper.—The means on which I must depend, under *that*, are a careful and cheerful performance of, and an acquiescence in whatever is my duty: I must accommodate myself to all its appointments; and be they health or languor; a dull or an active and gay life; a society agreeable to my fancy, or one that is not, or none at all—if I do but endeavour to keep up this right disposition, and behave accordingly, nothing *ought* to make me melancholy or unhappy, nothing *can*, nothing *shall*. Forward *beyond* this life, in this case, I not only *may*, but *ought* to look with joy and hope, with cheerfulness and alacrity of spirit: forward *in* this life, it is not only *painful*, but *faulty*, to look either with anxiety, or with self-flattering schemes. Yet *on* this present scene, from day to day, and *forward*, so far as is necessary to the duty of prudence, I may look with a smile of content and gratitude; for every day has something, has innumerable things, good and cheerful in it, if I know but how to make the best of it.

In a change of situation, think not, like a child, of the toys you leave, and the toys you shall find to make you amends for them: all playthings are brittle: think not, like a grazing animal, that you have changed one pasture for another; and

shall graze on this or that herb here with delight: "The herb withereth, the flower fadeth" every where. But think like a reasonable creature.—This change was appointed for me: acquiescence is my duty; duty must be my support. Yet, I know, such is the condescendence of Infinite Goodness, that I shall have many a slighter relief and agreeableness thrown in; but these are, by the by, not to be reckoned on beforehand, nor to be grieved for if they fail or intermit.

MISS TALBOT.

ON THE PERVERSION OF TALENTS.

AND least of all, let that man indulge the hope of impunity, who has profaned or perverted the glorious gift of high intellectual endowments. To see genius diffusing a malignant, instead of a beneficial influence—shining but to mislead—enchancing but to betray—to behold beings who were formed, not only to shed light and lustre over the sphere in which they move, but to shine as stars for ever and ever, voluntarily renouncing their high destiny, and led captive by Satan at his will, might make even angels weep. There is no instance of human perversity more deeply affecting—none over which a reflective and conscientious spirit mourns with keener feelings of regret.

Let the young and ardent mind, kindling with the love of knowledge, and delighting in communion with superior intellect, beware of the baneful influence of such perverted minds. Moderate your admiration—withhold your confi-

dence—bring these talents to the touchstone—weigh them in the balance—will they not be found wanting?—Have they been used to the glory of God, and promoted the best interests of man—or have they served only to invest voluptuousness with more seductive charms—and to render the delusions of infidelity more plausible and attractive?

“Be not deceived—God is not mocked—That which a man soweth, that shall he reap.”

But turn from these false objects of admiration, to contemplate those who have blended the loftiest aspirations of genius, with the profound humility of a Christian—who have learned, from the pages of revelation, the holy lessons of faith and obedience—who have united the brightness of talent to the beauty of usefulness—and, amidst unwearied exertion, have still felt and acknowledged themselves to be but unprofitable servants—“they have done that which it was their duty to do;”—rich is their reward even on earth—in peace of conscience—in the admiration of the wise and good—but glorious and transcendent will be their reward in heaven in that day when the Lord “maketh up his jewels.”

ANONYMOUS.

TRIVIAL DEVIATIONS THE PRECURSORS OF MORE IMPORTANT ONES.

How many fruitless blasts have I been spending upon this sullen fire! it was not through the greenness of the wood that made it so uneasy to be kindled; but it was alone the greatness of the

logs, on which the fire could take no hold but through the intervention of such smaller sticks as were at first wanting here: witness that I had no sooner laid on a little brushwood, but the flame from those kindled twigs invading and prevailing on the billets, grew suddenly great enough to threaten to make the house itself part of its fuel, and turn it to such ashes as it reduces the wood into. Methinks the blaze of this fire should light me to discern something instructive in it. These blocks may represent our necessary, these sticks our less important religious practices, and this aspiring flame the subtile inhabitant of that of hell. It will be but successlessly that the devil can attempt our grand resolves, till he have first mastered our less considerable ones, and made his successes against them not only degrees, but instruments, in the destroying of the others. Our more neglected, and seemingly trivial affections, having once received his fiery impressions, do easily impart them to higher faculties, and serve to kindle solidier materials. It is, therefore, the safest way to be faithful, even to our lesser determinations, and watchful over our less important passions; and whensoever we find ourselves tempted to violate the former or neglect the latter, not so barely to cast one eye on the inconsiderableness of what we are enticed to, as not to fix the other upon the consequences that may attend it; and therein to consider the importance of what such slighted things may, as they are managed, prove instrumental either to endanger or preserve.

BOYLE.

ON THE TOO EAGER PURSUIT OF WORLDLY THINGS.

THERE is a third portion of seed that falls among thorns. This wants neither root nor depth of earth. It grows up ; but the misfortune is, that the thorns grow up with it. The fault of the soil is not of bearing nothing, but of bearing too much ; of bearing what it ought not, of exhausting its strength and nutrition on vile and worthless productions, which choke the good seed, and prevent it from coming to perfection. " These are they," says our Saviour in the parallel place of St. Luke, " which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." In their youth, perhaps they receive religious instruction, they imbibe right principles, and listen to good advice : but no sooner do they go forth, no sooner do they leave those persons and those places from whom they received them, than they take the road either of business or of pleasure, pursue their interests, their amusements or their guilty indulgences with unbounded eagerness, and have neither time nor inclination to cultivate the seeds of religion that have been sown in their hearts, and to eradicate the weeds that have been mingled with them. The consequence is, that the weeds prevail, and the seeds are choked and lost.

Can there possibly be a more faithful picture of a large proportion of the Christian world ? Let us look around us, and observe how the greater

part of those we meet with are employed. In what is it that their thoughts are busied, their views, their hopes, and their fears centred, their attention occupied, their hearts, and souls, and affections engaged; is it in searching the Scriptures, in meditating on its doctrines, its precepts, its exhortations, its promises, and its threats? Is it in communing with their own hearts, in probing them to the very bottom, in looking carefully whether there be any way of wickedness in them, in plucking out every noxious weed, and leaving room for the good seed to grow and swell and expand itself, and bring forth fruit to perfection? Is it in cultivating purity of manners, a spirit of charity, towards the whole human race, and the most exalted sentiments of piety, gratitude, and love, towards their Maker and Redeemer? These, I fear, are far from being the general and principal occupations of mankind. Too many of them are, God knows, very differently employed. They are overwhelmed with business, they are devoted to amusement, they are immersed in sensuality, they are mad with ambition, they are idolaters of wealth, of power, of glory, of fame. On these things all their affections are fixed. These are the great objects of their pursuit; and if any accidental thought of religion happens to cross their way, they instantly dismiss the unbidden, unwelcome guest, with the answer of Felix to Paul—"Go thy way for this time; when we have a convenient season we will send for thee."

But how then, it is said, are we to conduct ourselves? If Providence has blessed us with riches, with honour, with power, with reputation,

are we to reject these gifts of our heavenly Father; or ought we not rather to accept them with thankfulness, and enjoy with gratitude the advantages and the comforts which his bounty has bestowed upon us? Most assuredly we ought. But then they are to be enjoyed also with innocence, with temperance, and with moderation. They must not be allowed to usurp the first place in our hearts; they must not be permitted to supplant God in our affection, or to dispute that pre-eminence and priority which he claims over every propensity of our nature. This and this only can prevent the good seed from being choked with the cares, the riches, and the pleasures of the present life.

BISHOP PORTEUS.

OF SELF-DECEPTION, AND THE DANGER OF IT.

OF self-deceit, in the great business of our lives, there are various modes. The far greater part of mankind deceive themselves by willing negligence, by refusing to think on their real state, lest such thoughts should trouble their quiet or interrupt their pursuits. To live religiously, is to walk, not by sight, but by faith; to act in confidence of things unseen, in hope of future recompense, and in fear of future punishment. To abstract the thoughts from things spiritual is not difficult; things future do not obtrude themselves upon the senses, and therefore easily give way to external objects. He that is willing to forget religion may quickly lose it; and that most men

are willing to forget it, experience informs us. If we look into the gay or the busy world, we see every eye directed towards pleasure or advantage, and every hour filled with expectation, or occupied by employment; and day passed after day in the enjoyment of success, or the vexation of disappointment.

Nor is it true only of men who are engaged in enterprises of hazard, which restrain the faculties to the utmost, and keep attention always upon the stretch. Religion is not only neglected by the projector and adventurer, by men who suspend their happiness on the slender thread of artifice, or stand tottering upon the point of chance. For, if we visit the most cool and regular parts of the community; if we turn our eye to the farm or to the shop, where one year glides uniformly after another, and nothing new or important is either expected or dreaded; yet still the same indifference about eternity will be found. There is no interest so small, nor engagement so slight, but that, if it be followed and expanded, it may be sufficient to keep religion out of the thoughts. Many men may be observed, not agitated by very violent passions, nor overborne by any powerful habits, nor depraved by any great degrees of wickedness; men who are honest dealers, faithful friends, and inoffensive neighbours; who yet have no vital principle of religion; who live wholly without self-examination, and indulge any desire that happens to arise, with very little resistance or compunction; who hardly know what it is to combat a temptation or to repent of a fault; but go on, neither self-approved nor self-

condemned ; not endeavouring after any excellence, nor reforming any vicious practice or irregular desire. They have no care of futurity, neither is God in all their thoughts ; they direct none of their actions to his glory ; they do nothing with the hope of pleasing ; they avoid nothing for the fear of offending him. Those men want not much of being religious ; they have nothing more than casual views to reform ; and, from being peaceable and temperate heathens, might, if they would once awaken to their eternal interest, become pious and exemplary Christians. But let them not be deceived ; they cannot suppose that God will accept him who never wished to be accepted by him, or made his will the rule of action.

Others there are, who, without attending to the written revelation of God's will, form to themselves a scheme of conduct in which vice is mingled with virtue, and who cover from themselves, and hope to cover from God, the indulgence of some criminal desire or the continuance of some vicious habit, by a few splendid instances of public spirit, or some few effusions of occasional bounty : but to these men it may, with emphatical propriety, be urged, that " God is not mocked ;" he will not be worshiped nor obeyed but according to his own laws.

The mode of self-deception which prevails most in the world, and by which the greatest number of souls is at last betrayed to destruction, is the art which we are all too apt to practise, of putting far from us the evil day, of setting the hour

of death, and the day of account, at a great distance.

That death is certain, every one knows ; nor is it less known, that life is destroyed, at all ages, by a thousand causes ; that the strong and the vigorous are liable to diseases, and that caution and temperance afford no security against the final stroke. Yet, as the thought of dissolution is dreadful, we do not willingly admit it ; the desire of life is connected with animation ; every living being shrinks from his destruction : to wish, and to hope, are never far asunder ; as we wish for long life, we hope that our wishes will be granted ; and what we hope, we either believe, or do not examine. So tenaciously does our credulity lay hold of life, that it is rare to find any man so old as not to expect an addition to his years ; or so far wasted and enfeebled with disease as not to flatter himself with hopes of recovery.

To those who procrastinate amendment in hopes of better opportunities in future time, it is too often vainly urged by the preacher, and vainly suggested by a thousand examples, that the hour of death is uncertain. This, which ought to be the cause of their terror, is the ground of their hope ; that, as death is uncertain, it may be distant. This uncertainty is, in effect, the great support of the whole system of life. The man who died yesterday had purchased an estate, to which he intended some time to retire ; or built a house, which he was hereafter to inhabit ; and planted gardens and groves, that, in a certain number of years, were to supply delicacies to his

feasts, and shades to his meditations. He is snatched away, and has left his designs and his labours to others.

As men please themselves with felicities to be enjoyed in the days of leisure and retreat ; so, among these felicities, it is not uncommon to design a reformation of life, and a course of piety. Among the more enlightened and judicious part of mankind, there are many who live in a continual disapprobation of their own conduct, who know, that they do every day what they ought to leave undone, and every day leave undone what they ought to do ; and who therefore consider themselves as living under the divine displeasure, in a state in which it would be very dangerous to die. Such men answer the reproaches of conscience with sincerity and intention of performance, but which they consider as debts to be discharged at some remote time. They neither sin with stupid negligence, nor with impious defiance of the divine laws ; they fear the punishments denounced against sin, but pacify their anxiety with possibilities of repentance, and with a plan of life to be led according to the strict precepts of religion, and to be closed at last by a death softened by holy consolations. Projects of future piety are perhaps not less common than of future pleasure, and are, as there is reason to fear, not less commonly interrupted ; with this dreadful difference, that he who misses his intended pleasure, escapes a disappointment ; but he who is cut off before the season of repentance, is exposed to the vengeance of an angry God.

JOHNSON.

REFLECTIONS

ON EVENING AND ON AUTUMN.

THERE is an eventide in the day,—an hour when the sun retires, and the shadows fall, and when nature assumes the appearance of soberness and silence. It is an hour from which every where the thoughtless fly, as peopled only in their imagination with images of gloom;—it is the hour, on the other hand, which, in every age, the wise have loved, as bringing with it sentiments and affections more valuable than all the splendours of the day.

Its first impression is to still all the turbulence of thought or passion which the day may have brought forth. We follow, with our eye, the descending sun,—we listen to the decaying sounds of labour and of toil,—and, when all the fields are silent around us, we feel a kindred stillness to breathe upon our souls, and to calm them from the agitations of society. From this first impression, there is a second which naturally follows it;—in the day we are with living men,—in the evening we begin to live with nature,—we see the world withdrawn from us,—the shades of night darken over the habitations of men, and we feel ourselves alone. It is an hour fitted, as it would seem, by Him who made us, to still, but with gentle hand, the throb of every unruly passion, and the ardour of every impure desire; and, while it veils for a time the world that misleads us, to awaken in our hearts those legitimate

affections which the heat of the day may have dissolved. There is yet a farther scene it presents to us:—While the world withdraws from us, and while the shades of the evening darken upon our dwellings, the splendours of the firmament come forward to our view. In the moments when earth is overshadowed, Heaven opens to our eyes the radiance of a sublimer being; our hearts follow the successive splendours of the scene; and while we forget, for a time, the obscurity of earthly concerns, we feel that there are “yet greater things than these,” and that we “have a Father who dwelleth in the heavens, and who yet deigneth to consider the things that are upon earth.”

Such is the train of thought which the eventide of the day is fitted to excite;—thoughts serious, doubtless, but inviting; which lead us daily, as it were, to the noblest conceptions of our being; and which seem destined to return us to the world with understandings elevated, and with hearts made better.

There is, in the second place, an “eventide” of the year, a season, as we now witness, when the sun withdraws his propitious light,—when the winds arise, and the leaves fall, and nature around us seems to sink into decay. It is said, in general, to be the season of melancholy; and if, by this word, be meant that it is the time of solemn and serious thought, it is undoubtedly the season of melancholy; yet, it is a melancholy so soothing, so gentle in its approach, and so prophetic in its influence, that they who have known it feel, as instinctively, that it is the

doing of God, and that the heart of man is not thus finely touched, but to fine issues.

It is a season, in the first place, which tends to wean us from the passions of the world. Every passion, however base or unworthy, is yet eloquent. It speaks to us of present enjoyment; it tells us of what men have done, and what men may do, and it supports us every where by the example of many around us. When we go out into the fields in the evening of the year, a different voice approaches us. We regard, even in spite of ourselves, the still but steady advances of time. A few days ago, and the summer of the year was grateful, and every element was filled with life, and the sun of heaven seemed to glory in his ascendant. He is now enfeebled in his power; the desert no more "blossoms like the rose;" the song of joy is no more heard among the branches; and the earth is strewed with that foliage which once bespoke the magnificence of summer. Whatever may be the passions which society has awakened, we pause amid this apparent desolation of nature. We sit down in the lodge "of the wayfaring man in the wilderness," and we feel that all we witness is the emblem of our own fate. Such also, in a few years, will be our own condition. The blossoms of our spring, the pride of our summer, will also fade into decay; and the pulse that now beats high with virtuous or with vicious desire, will gradually sink, and then must stop for ever. We rise from our meditations with hearts softened and subdued, and we return into life as into a shadowy scene, where we have "disquieted ourselves in

vain." Such is the first impression which the present scene of nature is fitted to make upon us. It is this first impression which intimidates the thoughtless and the gay ; and, indeed, if there were no other reflections that followed, I know not that it would be the business of wisdom to recommend such meditations. It is the consequences, however, of such previous thoughts which are chiefly valuable ; and among these there are two which may well deserve our consideration.

It is the peculiar character of the melancholy which such seasons excite, that it is general. It is not an individual remonstrance ;—it is not the harsh language of human wisdom, which too often insults, while it instructs us. When the winds of autumn sigh around us, their voice speaks not to us only, but to our kind ; and the lesson they teach us is not that we alone decay, but that such also is the fate of all the generations of man.—“ They are the green leaves of the tree of the desert, which perish, and are renewed.” In such a sentiment there is a kind of sublimity mingled with its melancholy ;—our tears fall, but they fall not for ourselves ;—and, although the train of our thoughts may have begun with the selfishness of our own concerns, we feel that, by the ministry of some mysterious power, they end in awakening our concern for every being that lives.—Yet a few years, we think, and all that now bless, or all that now convulse humanity, will also have perished. The mightiest pageantry of life will pass,—the loudest notes of triumph or of conquest will be silent in the grave ;—the wicked, wherever active, “ will cease from troubling,” and the

weary, wherever suffering, "will be at rest." Under an impression so profound, we feel our own hearts better. The cares, the animosities, the hatreds which society may have engendered, sink unperceived from our bosoms. In the general desolation of nature, we feel the littleness of our own passions;—we look forward to that kindred evening which time must bring to all;—we anticipate the graves of those we hate, as of those we love. Every unlaidd passion falls with the leaves that fall around us; and we return slowly to our homes, and to the society which surrounds us, with the wish only to enlighten or to bless them.

If there were no other effects of such appearances of nature upon our minds, they would still be valuable,—they would teach us humility,—and with it they would teach us charity. In the same hour in which they taught us our own fragility, they would teach us commiseration for the whole family of man.—But there is a farther sentiment which such scenes inspire, more valuable than all; and we know little the designs of Providence when we do not yield ourselves in such hours to the beneficent instincts of our imagination.

It is the unvarying character of nature, amid all its scenes, to lead us at last to its author; and it is for this final end that all its varieties have such dominion upon our minds. We are led by the appearances of spring to see his bounty;—we are led by the splendours of summer to see his greatness. In the present hours, we are led to a higher sentiment; and, what is most

remarkable, the very circumstances of melancholy are those which guide us most securely to put our trust in him. We are witnessing the decay of the year; we go back in imagination, and find that such in every generation has been the fate of man;—we look forward, and we see that to such ends all must come at last;—we lift our desponding eyes in search of comfort, and we see above us one “who is ever the same, and to whose years there is no end.” Amid the vicissitudes of nature, we discover that central majesty “in whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning.” We *feel* that there is a God; and, from the tempestuous sea of life, we hail that polar star of nature, to which a sacred instinct had directed our eyes, and which burns with undecaying ray to lighten us among all the darkness of the deep.

From this great conviction there is another sentiment which succeeds. Nature, indeed, yearly perishes; but it is yearly renewed. Amid all its changes, the immortal spirit of Him that made it remains; and the same sun which now marks with his receding ray the autumn of the year, will again arise in his brightness, and bring along with him the promise of the spring and all the magnificence of summer. Under such convictions, hope dawns upon the sadness of the heart. The melancholy of decay becomes the very herald of renewal; the magnificent circle of nature opens upon our view;—we anticipate the analogous resurrection of our being;—we see beyond the grave a greater spring, and we people it with those who have given joy to that which is passed. With

such final impressions, we submit ourselves gladly to the destiny of our being. While the sun of mortality sinks, we hail the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, and, in the hours when all the honours of nature are perishing around us, we prostrate ourselves in deeper adoration before Him "who sitteth upon its throne."

ALISON.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE RETURN OF SPRING.

THE words uttered by Job * are still applicable to us. Even now, the greatest and most important part of our religious knowledge, our knowledge of the nature and attributes of "Him that made us" is acquired solely "by the hearing of the ear." The early instruction of the parent, the occasional hours of reading and meditation, and the public exhortations of the pulpit, constitute all that the generality of men know upon the most momentous subject of human information. There are few who have been taught in infancy to raise their minds to the contemplation of his works; who love to kindle their adoration at the altar of nature, or to lose themselves in astonishment amid the immensity of the universe; and who thus "seeing him with their eyes" learn to associate the truths of religion with all the most valued emotions of their hearts. It is the natural consequence of these partial views of the Deity

* "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." *Job*, xlii. 5.

to narrow our conceptions of his being ; to chill the native sensibility of our minds to devotion ; and to render religion rather the gloomy companion of the church and the closet than the animating friend of our ordinary hours.

Reflections of this kind seem very naturally to arise to us from the season we experience, and the scenes we at present behold. In the beautiful language of the wise man, " the winter is now over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." In these moments, we are the witnesses of the most beautiful and most astonishing spectacle that nature ever presents to our view. The earth, by an annual miracle, rises again, as from her grave, into life and beauty. A new creation peoples the wintry desert ; and the voice of joy and gladness is heard among these scenes, which but of late lay in silence and desolation. The sun comes forth, " like a bridegroom from his chamber," to diffuse light and life over every thing he beholds ; and the breath of heaven seems to brood with maternal love over that infant creation it has so lately awakened into being. In such hours there is a natural impulse which leads us to meditation and praise. We love to go out amid the scenery of nature, to mark its progressive beauty, and to partake in the new joy of every thing that lives ; —and we almost involuntarily lift up our eyes to that heaven from whence cometh the hope of man, " which openeth its hand, and filleth all things with plenteousness." Even upon the most uncultivated minds, these seasons have their in-

fluence; and wherever, over the face of the earth, the spring is now returning, even amid nations uncheered by the light of the Gospel, the poor inhabitant is yet everywhere preparing some rude solemnity, to express the renewal of his joy and the return of his praise.

ALISON.

THE CONGREGATION OF THE WICKED SUFFICIENT TO CONSTITUTE HELL.

Now this is precisely the state of things in the nether world. There is no hope, there is no end, there are no good beings to hold the balance against evil, and there is no restraining providence of God. Were there nothing more, I hold this to be enough to constitute the hottest, cruelest hell. I ask no elemental fire, no furnace of living flames, no tormenting demons, nothing but a congregation of the wicked, in the wicked state in which they died and appeared at the tribunal, driven together into one settlement, to make the best or the worst of it they can. Let every man arise in his proper likeness, clothed in his proper nature, which he did not choose to put off, but to die with; let beauty arise with the same pure tints which death did nip, and wit with all its flashes, and knowledge with all its powers, and policy with all its address; let the generations of the unrighteous gather together;—and because of their possessing none of the qualities which God approves in his volume, nor caring to possess them, let them be shipped across the impassable

gulf to some planet of their own, to carry on their several intrigues and indulgences for ever ;—then here were a hell, which neither fire nor brimstone, nor gnawing worm, are able to represent. For observe, it is such only in whom godliness could take no root that were transported thither, in whom selfishness carried it over benevolence, lust over self-control, interest over duty, the devil over God ; and that in a world where hope and encouragement were all thrown into the good scale. Now, if the evil principle predominated here, where it was discountenanced by the institutions of God, and many institutions of men, and most of all by the shipwreck of present and eternal good which it brought on—much more there, where no checks exist, nor tendency in things to right themselves. It must be that seeing the good would not flourish here, where the whole atmosphere and influences of heaven wooed it, die it must there, where not one genial ray can reach it. Angels and ministers of grace come not there ; salvation of Christ comes not ; hope comes not ; and the determination of death comes not : there are no just men to parry off mischief, or to overawe it. Every one is condemned for the predominancy of evil in one shape or other. How can it otherwise be, then, but that the good principle will die and be forgotten, the evil principle rise in strength, and riot in the activity of the unhappy people. IRVING.

THE
ADVANTAGES OF EARLY PIETY.

CONSIDER further, If we will deny God the hearty and vigorous service of our best days, how can we expect that he will accept the faint and flattering devotions of old age? wise men are wont to provide some stay and comfort for themselves against the infirmities of that time; that they may have something to lean upon in their weakness, something to mitigate the afflictions of that dark and gloomy evening; that what they cannot enjoy of present pleasure, may in some measure be made up to them in comfortable reflections upon the past actions of a holy and well-spent life.

But on the other hand, if we have neglected religion days without number; if we have lived a vicious life; we have foolishly contrived to make our burden then heaviest, when we are least able to stand under it; we have provided an infinite matter for repentance, when there is hardly any space left for the exercise of it; and whatever is done in it will, I fear, be so done, as to signify but very little, either to our present comfort, or to our future happiness.

Consider this, O young man, in time; and if thou wouldst not have God "cast thee off in thine old age, and forsake thee when thy strength fail, do thou remember him in the days of thy youth; for this is the acceptable time, this is the day of salvation."

Acquaint thyself with him, and remember him now; defer not so necessary a work, no not for a

moment: begin it just now, that so thou mayst have made some good progress in it before the "evil days come," before the "sun, and the moon, and the stars be darkened," and all the comforts and joys of life be fled and gone.

TILLOTSON.

THE FACULTIES OF HUMAN NATURE, AND THEIR PERVERSION.

EXAMINE first with attention the natural powers and faculties of man; invention, reason, judgment, memory; a mind "of large discourse," "looking before and after," reviewing the past, thence determining for the present, and anticipating the future; discerning, collecting, combining, comparing; capable, not merely of apprehending, but of admiring, the beauty of moral excellence: with fear and hope to warm and animate; with joy and sorrow to solace and soften; with love to attach, with sympathy to harmonize, with courage to attempt, with patience to endure, and with the power of conscience, that faithful monitor within the breast, to enforce the conclusions of reason, and direct and regulate the passions of the soul. Truly we must pronounce him "majesty, though in ruin." "Happy, happy world!" would be the exclamation of the inhabitant of some other planet, on being told of a globe like ours, peopled with such creatures as these, and abounding with situations and occasions to call forth the multiplied excellencies of their nature. "Happy, happy world, with what

delight must your great Creator and Governor witness your conduct, and what a glorious recompense awaits you when your term of probation shall have expired."

"I bone, quo virtus tua te vocat: i pede fausto
Grandia Laturus meritum præmia."

But we have indulged too long in these delightful speculations; a sad reverse presents itself, on our survey of the *actual* state of man; when from viewing his *natural* powers, we follow him into *practice*, and see the uses to which he applies them. Take in the whole of the prospect, view him in every age, and climate, and nation, in every condition and period of society. Where now do you discover the characters of his exalted nature? "How is the gold become dim, and the fine gold changed?" How is his reason clouded, his affections perverted, his conscience stupified! How do anger, and envy, and hatred, and revenge spring up in his wretched bosom! How is he a slave to the meanest of his appetites! what fatal propensities does he discover to evil! What inaptitude to good!

WILBERFORCE.

THE DANGER OF SINS OF OMISSION.

A FARTHER danger to good kind of people seems to arise from a mistaken idea, that only great and actual sins are to be guarded against. Whereas sins of omission make up, perhaps, the most formidable part of *their* catalogue of offences. These generally supply in number what they want in weight, and are the more dangerous for

being little ostensible. They continue to be repeated with less regret, because the remembrance of their predecessors does not, like the remembrance of formal, actual crimes, assume a body and a shape, and terrify by the impression of particular scenes and circumstances. While the memory of transacted evil haunts a tender conscience by perpetual apparition; omitted duty, having no local or personal existence, not being recorded by standing acts and deeds, and having no distinct image to which the mind may recur, sinks into quiet oblivion, without deeply wounding the conscience, or tormenting the imagination. These omissions were perhaps among the "secret sins" from which the royal penitent so earnestly desired to be cleansed; and it is worthy of the most serious consideration, that these are the offences against which the Gospel pronounces very alarming denunciations. It is not less against negative than actual evil, that affectionate exhortation, lively remonstrance, and pointed parable, are exhausted. It is against the tree which bore no fruit, the lamp which had no oil, the unprofitable servant who made no use of his talent, that the severe sentence is denounced; as well as against corrupt fruit, bad oil, and talents ill employed. We are led to believe, from the same high authority, that omitted duties, and neglected opportunities, will furnish no inconsiderable portion of our future condemnation. A very awful part of the decision, in the great day of account, seems to be reserved merely for omissions and negatives. "Ye gave me no meat; ye gave me no drink; ye took me not in; ye visited me not."

MISS H. MORE.

ON THE POWER OF CONSCIENCE TO PUNISH VICE.

It would be in vain to dissemble, that, in the present state, as is the offence such is not always the punishment. Notoriously profligate sinners often partake not, to appearance, the common evils of life, but pass their days in prosperity, affluence, and health, and die without any visible tokens of the divine displeasure. The fact is indisputable; and it was a stumbling-block by very good men of old time, not without great difficulty surmounted. The conflict occasioned by it in the human mind is described at large in the seventy-third Psalm, and in the twelfth chapter of the prophet Jeremiah; nor will believers fail sometimes to experience a temptation of a similar nature, while the object shall continue to present itself, that is, while the world shall last.

To take off, in some measure, the force of the objection, it must be remarked, that, besides those judgments of God, which lie open to the observation of mankind, there are others, even in the present life, of a secret and invisible kind, known only to the party by whom they are felt. There is a court constantly sitting within, from whose jurisdiction the criminal can plead no exemption, and from whose presence he cannot fly; there is evidence produced against him, which he can neither disprove nor evade; and there, a just sentence is not only passed, but forthwith executed on him, by the infliction of torments, severe and poignant as the strokes of whips or scorpions; torments, exquisite in proportion to the sensibility

of the part affected; torments, of which he sees the beginning, but is never likely to see the end.

Trust not to appearances. Men are not what they seem. In the brilliant scenes of splendour and magnificence, of luxury and dissipation, surrounded by the companions of his pleasure, and the flatterers of his vices, amidst the flashes of wit and merriment, when all wears the face of gaiety and festivity, the profligate often reads his doom, written by the hand whose characters are indelible. Should he turn away his eyes from beholding it, and succeed in the great work during the course of his revels, yet the time will come when from scenes like these he must retire, and be alone: and then, as Dr. South states the question, in a manner not to be answered, "What is all that a man can enjoy in this way for a week, a month, or a year, compared with what he feels for one hour, when his conscience shall take him aside, and rate him by himself?"

There is likewise another hour which will come, and that soon—the hour when life must end; when the accumulated wealth of the east and the west, with all the assistance it is able to procure, will not be competent to obtain the respite of a moment; when the impenitent sinner shall be called—and must obey the call—to leave every thing, and give up his accounts to his Maker, of the manner in which he has spent his time, and employed his talents. Of what is *said* by such, at that hour, we know not much. Care is generally taken that we never should. Of what is *thought*, we know nothing.—O merciful God, grant that we never may!

BISHOP HORNE.

THE LITTLENES AND INSECURITY OF OUR WORLD.

THOUGH this earth were to be burned up, though the trumpet of its dissolution were sounded, though yon sky were to pass away as a scroll, and every visible glory which the finger of the Divinity has inscribed on it, were to be put out for ever—an event so awful to us, and to every world in our vicinity, by which so many suns would be extinguished, and so many varied scenes of life and population would rush into forgetfulness—What is it in the high scale of the Almighty's workmanship? a mere shred, which, though scattered into nothing, would leave the universe of God one entire scene of greatness and of majesty. Though the earth and these heavens were to disappear, there are other worlds which roll afar; the light of other suns shines upon them; and the sky which mantles them is garnished with other stars. Is it presumption to say that the moral world extends to these distant and unknown regions? that they are occupied with people? that the charities of home and of neighbourhood flourish there? that the praises of God are there lifted up, and his goodness rejoiced in? that piety has its temples and its offerings? and the richness of the divine attributes is there felt and admired by intelligent worshippers?

And what is this world in the immensity which teems with them;—and what are they who occupy it? The universe at large would suffer as little in its splendour and variety by the destruction of our planet, as the verdure and sublime

magnitude of a forest would suffer by the fall of a single leaf. The leaf quivers on the branch which supports it. It lies at the mercy of the slightest accident. A breath of wind tears it from its stem, and it lights on the stream of water which passes underneath. In a moment of time, the life, which we know by the microscope it teems with, is extinguished ; and an occurrence so insignificant in the eye of man, and on the scale of his observation, carries in it to the myriads which people this little leaf an event as terrible and as decisive as the destruction of a world. Now on the grand scale of the universe, we, the occupiers of this ball, which performs its little round among the suns and the systems that astronomy has unfolded—we may feel the same littleness and the same insecurity. We differ from the leaf only in this circumstance, that it would require the operation of greater elements to destroy us. But these elements exist. The fire which rages within may lift its devouring energy to the surface of our planet, and transform it into one wide and wasting volcano. The sudden formation of elastic matter in the bowels of the earth—and it lies within the agency of known substances to accomplish this—may explode it into fragments. The exhalation of noxious air from below may impart a virulence to the air that is around us ; it may affect the delicate proportion of its ingredients ; and the whole of animated nature may wither and die under the malignity of a tainted atmosphere. A blazing comet may cross this fated planet in its orbit, and realize all the terrors which superstition has con-

ceived of it. We cannot anticipate with precision the consequences of an event which every astronomer must know to lie within the limits of chance and probability. It may hurry our globe towards the sun—or drag it to the outer regions of the planetary system—or give it a new axis of revolution—and the effect which I shall simply announce, without explaining it, would be to change the place of the ocean, and bring another mighty flood upon our islands and continents.

These are changes which may happen in a single instant of time, and against which nothing known in the present system of things provides us with any security. They might not annihilate the earth, but they would unpeuple it, and we who tread its surface with such firm and assured footsteps, are at the mercy of the devouring elements, which, if let loose upon us by the hand of the Almighty, would spread solitude and silence and death over the dominions of the world.

Now, it is this littleness, and this insecurity, which make the protection of the Almighty so dear to us, and bring, with such emphasis to every pious bosom, the holy lessons of humility and gratitude. The God who sitteth above, and presides in high authority over all worlds, is mindful of man; and though at this time his energy is felt in the remotest provinces of creation, we may feel the same security in his providence as if we were the objects of his undivided care.

It is not for us to bring our minds up to this mysterious agency. But, such is the incomprehensible fact, that the same Being, whose eye is abroad over the whole universe, gives vegetation

to every blade of grass, and motion to every particle of blood which circulates through the veins of the minutest animal ; that, though his mind takes into its comprehensive grasp immensity and all its wonders, I am as much known to him as if I were the single object of his attention, that he marks all my thoughts ; that he gives birth to every feeling and every movement within me ; and that, with an exercise of power which I can neither describe nor comprehend, the same God who sits in the highest heaven and reigns over the glories of the firmament, is at my right hand, to give me every breath which I draw, and every comfort which I enjoy.

CHALMERS.

ON THE FEAR OF DEATH.

THERE is, at least, one consideration, which must embitter the life of him who places his happiness in his present state ; a consideration that cannot be suppressed by any artful sophistries, which the appetites or the senses are always ready to suggest, and which it might be imagined not always possible to avoid in the most rapid whirl of pleasure, or the most incessant tumults of employment. As it is impossible for any man not to know, it may be well imagined difficult for him not to remember, that, however surrounded by his dependents, however caressed by his patrons, however applauded by his flatterers, or esteemed by his friends, he must one day die ; that, though he should have reason to imagine himself secured

from any sudden diminution of his wealth or any violent precipitation from his rank or power, yet they must soon be taken away, by a force not to be resisted or escaped. He cannot but sometimes think, when he surveys his acquisitions, or counts his followers, "that this night his soul may be required of him;" and that he had applauded himself for the attainment of that which he cannot hope to keep long, and which, if it could make him happy while he enjoys it, is yet of very little value, because the enjoyment must be very short.

The story of the great Eastern monarch, who, when he surveyed his innumerable army from an eminence, wept at the reflection that in less than a hundred years not one of all that multitude would remain, has been often mentioned; because the particular circumstances in which that remark occurred, naturally claim the thought and strike the imagination; but every man that places his happiness in external objects, may, every day, with equal propriety, make the same observations. Though he does not lead armies, or govern kingdoms, he may reflect, whenever he finds his heart swelling with any present advantage, that he must, in a very short time, lose what he so much esteems; that in a year, a month, a day, or an hour, he may be struck out from the book of life, and placed in a state where wealth or honour shall have no residence, and where all those distinctions shall be for ever obliterated, which now engross his thoughts, and exalt his pride.

This reflection will surely be sufficient to hinder that peace, which all terrestrial enjoyments can

afford, from being perfect. It surely will soon disperse those meteors of happiness that glitter in the eyes only of the thoughtless and the supine, and awaken him to a serious and rational inquiry, where real happiness is to be found; by what means man, whom the great Creator cannot be supposed to have formed without the power of obtaining happiness, may set himself free from the shackles of anxiety with which he is encumbered; may throw off the load of terror which oppresses him, and liberate himself from those horrors which the approach of death perpetually excites.

This he will immediately find only to be accomplished by securing to himself the protection of a Being mighty to save; a Being, whose assistance may be extended equally to all parts of his duration; who can equally defend him in the time of danger and of security; in the tumults of the day and the privacy of the night; in the time of tribulation, and in a time frequently more fatal, the time of wealth; and in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. And when he has found the necessity of this sovereign Protector, and humbled himself with a due conviction of his own impotence, he may at last find the only comfort which this life can afford him, by remembering, that this great, this unbounded Being, has informed us of the terms on which perfect peace is to be obtained, and has promised it to those whose mind is stayed on him. JOHNSON.

THE
MUTABILITY OF HUMAN LIFE.

DARK and uncertain is the state of being in which we now exist. Human life is not formed to answer those high expectations, which, in the era of youth and imagination, we are apt to entertain. When we first set out in life, we bid defiance to the evil day ; we indulge in dreams and visions of romantic bliss, and fondly lay the scene of perfect and uninterrupted happiness for the time to come. But experience soon undeceives us : we awake and find it was but a dream. We make but few steps in life without finding the world to be a turbulent scene ; we soon experience the changes that await us, and feel the thorns of the wilderness wherein we dwell. Our hopes are frequently blasted in the bud, our designs are defeated in the very moment of expectation, and we meet with sorrow, and vexation, and disappointment on all hands. There are lives besides our own in which we are deeply interested ; lives in which our happiness is placed, and on which our hopes depend. Just when we have laid a plan of happy life ; when, after the experience of years, we have found out a few chosen friends, and have begun to enjoy that little circle in which we would wish to live and to die, an unexpected stroke disappoints our hopes, and lays all our schemes in the dust. When, after much labour and care, we have reared the goodly structure ; when we have fenced it, as we fondly imagine, from every storm that blows, and indulge the pleasing hope that it will always endure, an

invisible hand interposes, and overturns it from the foundation. Son of prosperity ! thou now lookest forth from thy high tower ; thou now gloriest in thine excellence ; thou sayest, that thy mountain stands strong, and that thou art firm as the cedar of Lebanon—but stand in awe. Before the mighty God of Jacob, and by the blast of the breath of his nostrils, the mountain hath been overturned, and the cedar of Lebanon hath fallen like the leaf before the tempest. At this very moment of time the wheel is in motion that reverses the lot of men, that brings the prosperous to the dust, and lays the mighty low. Now, O man, thou rejoicest in thy strength ; but know that for thee the bed of languishing, the bed of death will be spread. Thou now removest from thee the evil day, and sayest in thy heart thou shalt never sorrow ; but remember the changes of this mortal life. The calmest and the stillest hour precedes the whirlwind and the earthquake ; the monarch hath drawn the chariot of state in which he was wont to ride in triumph ; and the greatest who ever awed the world have moralized at the turn of the wheel. LOGAN.

THE

NECESSITY OF PURITY OF MANNERS.

LICENTIOUS wits have taught great numbers to believe that purity of manners is a vulgar and contemptible virtue, and that all pretence to it is in general nothing more than hypocrisy and grimace. But let us not be frightened by a few hard words, and a little witless buffoonery,

from pursuing steadily the invariable rule of moral rectitude. As sure as God himself is all purity and perfection, there is such a thing as real purity of heart and life ; and it is one of the most exalted virtues that can dignify human nature. It gives that strength and vigour and masculine firmness to the mind, which is the foundation of every thing great and excellent. It has produced some of the noblest struggles and most heroical exertions of soul that the world ever saw, and is, perhaps, a more convincing, more unequivocal proof of our sincerity in religion than even benevolence itself. When it is considered how many inducements, how many temptations, there are to acts of humanity, to which nature prompts, to which fashion draws, to which vanity, interest, popularity, ambition, sometimes lead us, one cannot always be sure that they proceed from a truly christian principle. But he who combats his darling passions, and gives up the fondest wishes of his soul ; who keeps a constant guard upon all his thoughts, words, and actions ; intrepidly withstands the most alluring temptations, and takes up his cross to follow Christ ; this man cannot well be influenced by any thing but a strong sense of duty, and an undissembled conviction that he is bound to obey even the severest precepts of the gospel. His good actions are neither seen nor applauded of men. They are performed in secrecy and in silence, without ostentation, without reward, save only the approbation of that all-seeing God, who is witness to the bitter conflicts of his soul, and will one day make him ample amends in the sight of angels and of men.

Let it not, however, be supposed, that any thing here said is meant to depreciate that most heavenly virtue, charity, or to rob those that exercise it of that fair name, that heartfelt satisfaction, and those glorious rewards hereafter, which cannot fail to recompense their generous labours. May every branch and species of benevolence for ever flourish and abound. May its divine and blessed influence spread continually wider and wider, till it takes in every creature under heaven, and leaves not one misery unallieviated, one grievance unredressed. But all excellent as it is, let not this, let not any single virtue engross our whole attention. Let us not confine ourselves to the easy, the delightful, the reputable works of beneficence, and neglect the other great branch of moral duty, self-denial; no less necessary and important, but much more difficult, and which, therefore, stands in need of every possible argument in its favour to recommend and support it. Let us no longer make invidious and unjust distinctions between these two kindred virtues. In nature, in reason, in the sight of God, in the gospel of Christ, self government is of equal value with social duties. They equally tend to the perfection of our own minds, and the comfort of our fellow creatures. The same rewards are in scripture promised to both; the same penalties are denounced against the violation of both; and there is so strict and intimate a union between them, that the cultivation or neglect of the one must necessarily lead, and has, in fact, always ultimately led, to the improvement or depravation of the other. What then God and nature, as well as Christ and his

apostles, have joined together, let no man dare to put asunder. Let not any one flatter himself with the hope of obtaining the rewards, or even escaping the punishments of the Gospel, by performing only *one* branch of his duty. Let him not imagine that the most rigorous severity of manners can excuse him from the exercise of undissembled love to God and to mankind ; nor, on the other hand, let him suppose that under the shelter either of devotion or of benevolence, he may securely indulge his favourite passions ; may compound, as it were, with God for his sensuality by acts of generosity, and purchase by his wealth a general licence to sin. Let him not, in short, content himself with being only half a Christian. Let him visit, as often as he pleases, the fatherless and the widows in their affliction. Let his piety be fervent, and his faith sincere. But let him, at the same time, take care, as he values his salvation, that he keep himself unspotted from the world.

BISHOP PORTEUS.

THE INFAMY OF SLANDER.

THIS delusive itch for slander, too common in all ranks of people, whether to gratify a little ungenerous resentment ;—whether oftener out of a principle of levelling, from a narrowness and poverty of soul, ever impatient of merit and superiority in others ;—whether from a mean ambition, or the insatiate lust of being witty (a talent in which ill nature and malice are no ingredients) ;—or lastly, whether from a natural cruelty of

disposition, abstracted from all views and considerations of self; to which one, or whether to all jointly, we are indebted for this contagious malady, thus much is certain, from whatever seeds it springs, the growth and progress of it are as destructive to as they are unbecoming a civilized people. To pass a hard and ill natured reflection upon an undesigning action;—to invent, or, which is equally bad, to propagate a vexatious report without colour and grounds; to plunder an innocent man of his character and good name, a jewel which, perhaps, he has starved himself to purchase, and probably would hazard his life to secure;—to rob him at the same time of his happiness and peace of mind, perhaps his bread,—the bread, may be, of a virtuous family; and all this, as Solomon says of the madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, and saith, Am I not in sport? all this out of wantonness, and oftener from worse motives,—the whole appears such a complication of badness, as requires no words or warmth of fancy to aggravate. Pride, treachery, envy, hypocrisy, malice, cruelty, and self-love, may have been said, in one shape or other, to have occasioned all the frauds and mischiefs that ever happened in the world; but the chances against a coincidence of them all in one person are so many, that one would have supposed the character of a common slanderer as rare and difficult a production in nature as that of a great genius, which seldom happens above once in an age.

STERNE.

ON THE ORIGIN AND PREVALENCE OF CALUMNY.

ALMOST one half of our time is spent in telling and hearing evils of one another ; some unfortunate knight is always upon the stage ; and every hour brings forth something strange and terrible to fill up our discourse and our astonishment, "How people can be so foolish!"—and it is well if the compliment ends there ; so that there is not a social virtue for which there is so constant a demand, or, consequently, so well worth cultivating, as that which opposes this unfriendly current. Many and rapid are the springs which feed it ; and various and sudden, God knows, are the gusts which render it unsafe to us in this short passage of our life ! Let us make the discourse as serviceable as we can, by tracing some of the most remarkable of them up to their source.

And, first, there is one miserable inlet to this evil, and which, by the way, if speculation be supposed to precede practice, may have been derived, for aught I know, from some of our busiest inquirers after nature ; and that is, when with more zeal than knowledge we account for phenomena before we are sure of their existence. "It is not the manner of the Romans to condemn any man to death" (much less to be martyred) said Festus ; "and doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth?" cried Nicodemus ; "and he that answereth or determineth a matter before he has heard it,—it

is folly and shame unto him." We are generally in such a haste to make our own decrees, that we pass over the justice of these,—and then the scene is so changed by it that 'tis our own folly which is real, and that of the accused which is imaginary; through too much precipitancy it will happen so: and then the jest is spoiled,—or we have criticised our own shadow.

A second way is, when the process goes on more orderly, and we begin with getting information;—but do it from those suspected evidences, against which our Saviour warns us when he bids us "Not to judge according to appearance." In truth, it is behind these that most of the things which blind human judgment lie concealed;—and, on the contrary, there are many things which appear to be,—which are not: "Christ came eating and drinking,—behold a wine-bibber!"—he sat with sinners,—he was their friend:—in many cases of which kind, Truth, like a modest matron, scorns art,—and disdains to press herself forward into the circle to be seen:—ground sufficient for Suspicion to draw up the libel,—for Malice to give the torture,—or rash Judgment to start up and pass a final sentence.

A third way is, when the facts which denote misconduct are less disputable, but are commented upon with an asperity of censure, which a humane or a gracious temper would spare. An abhorrence against what is criminal is so fair a plea for this, and looks so like virtue in the face, that in a sermon against rash judgment, it would be unseasonable to call it in question,—and yet, I declare, in the fullest torrent of exclamations

which the guilty can deserve, that the simple apostrophe, Who made me to differ?—why was not I in an example? would touch my heart more, and give me a better earnest of the commentators than the most corrosive period you could add. The punishment of the unhappy, I fear, is enough without it;—and were it not,—’tis piteous the tongue of a Christian (whose religion is all candour and courtesy) should be made the executioner! We find in the discourse between Abraham and the rich man, though the one was in heaven, and the other in hell, yet still the patriarch treated him with mild language:—“Son! Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime,” &c.—And in the dispute about the body of Moses, between the archangel and the devil (himself) St. Jude tells, he durst not bring a railing accusation against him;—it was unworthy his high character,—and, indeed, might have been impolitic too; for if he had (as one of our divines notes upon the passage) the devil had been too hard for him at railing; it was his own weapon; and the basest spirits, after his example, are the most expert at it.

This leads me to the observation of a fourth cruel inlet to this evil: and that is, the desire of being thought men of wit and parts; and the vain expectation of coming honestly by the title, by shrewd and sarcastic reflections upon whatever is done in the world. This is setting up trade upon the broken stock of other people’s failings, perhaps their misfortunes, so much good may it do them with what honour they can get; the furthest of which, I think, is to be praised,

as we do some sauces, with tears in our eyes. It is a commerce most illiberal; and as it requires no vast capital, too many embark in it; and so long as there are bad passions to be gratified, and bad heads to judge,—with such it may pass for wit, or at least like some vile relation whom all in the family is ashamed of, claim kindred with it, even in better companies. Whatever be the degree of its affinity, it has helped to give wit a bad name; as if the main essence of it was satire:—certainly there is a difference between bitterness and saltiness; and that is, between the malignity and festivity of wit: the one is a mere quickness of apprehension, void of humanity,—and is a talent of the devil: the other comes from the Father of spirits, so pure and abstracted from persons, that willingly it hurts no man; or if it touches upon an indecorum, 'tis with the dexterity of true genius, which enables him rather to give a new colour to the absurdity, and let it pass. He may smile at the shape of the obelisk raised to another's fame; but the malignant wit will level it at once with the ground, and build his own upon the ruins of it.

What then, ye rash censurers of the world, have ye no mansions for your credit but those from whence ye have extruded the right owners? Are there no regions for you to shine in that ye descend for it into the low caverns of abuse and defamation? Have ye no seats but those of the scornful to sit down in? If Honour has mistook his road, or the Virtues in their excesses have approached too near the confines of Vice, are they therefore to be cast down the precipice?

Must Beauty for ever be trampled upon in the dirt for one, one false step? And shall no one virtue or good quality, out of the thousand the fair penitent may have left,—shall not one of them be suffered to stand by her?—Just God of heaven and earth!

—But thou art merciful, loving, and righteous, and lookest down with pity upon these wrongs thy servants do unto each other. Pardon us, we beseech thee, for them, and all our transgressions! let it not be remembered that we were brethren of the same flesh, the same feelings, and infirmities! My God! write it not down in thy book that thou madest us merciful after thy own image! that thou hast given us a religion so courteous, so good tempered, that every precept of it carries a balm along with it to heal the soreness of our natures and sweeten our spirit, that we might live with such kind intercourse in this world, as will fit us to exist together in a better.

STERNE.

THE malignity of an offence arises, either from the motives that prompted it, or the consequences produced by it.

If we examine the sin of calumny by this rule, we shall find both the motives and consequences of the worst kind: we shall find its causes and effects concurring to distinguish it from common wickedness, and rank it with those crimes that pollute the earth and blacken human nature.

The most usual incitement to defamation is envy, or impatience of the merit or success of

others; a malice raised not by any injury received, but merely by the sight of that happiness which we cannot attain. This is a passion, of all others most hurtful and contemptible; it is pride complicated with laziness; pride which inclines us to wish ourselves upon the level with others, and laziness which hinders us from pursuing our inclinations with vigour and assiduity. Nothing then remains, but that the envious man endeavour to stop those, by some artifice, whom he will not strive to overtake, and reduce his superiors to his own meanness, since he cannot rise to their elevation. To this end he examines their conduct with a resolution to condemn it; and, if he can find no remarkable defects, makes no scruple to aggravate smaller errors, till, by adding one vice to another, and detracting from their virtues by degrees, he has divested them of that reputation which obscured his own, and left them no qualities to be admitted or rewarded.

Calumnies are sometimes the offspring of resentment. When a man is opposed in a design which he cannot justify, and defeated in the prosecution of schemes of tyranny, extortion, or oppression, he seldom fails to revenge his overthrow by blackening that integrity which effected it. No rage is more fierce than that of a villain disappointed of those advantages which he has pursued by a long train of wickedness. He has forfeited the esteem of mankind; he has burdened his conscience, and hazarded his future happiness, to no purpose; and has now nothing to hope but the satisfaction of involving those, who have broken his measures, in misfortunes and disgrace. By

wretches like these it is no wonder if the vilest arts of detraction are practised without scruple, since both their resentment and their interest direct them to depress those whose influence and authority will be employed against them.

But what can be said of those who, without being impelled by any violence of passion, without having received any injury or provocation, and without any motives of interest, vilify the deserving and the worthless without distinction; and, merely to gratify the levity of temper and incontinence of tongue, throw out aspersions equally dangerous with those of virulence and enmity?

These always reckon themselves, and are commonly reckoned by those whose gaiety they promote, among the benevolent, the candid, and the humane; men without gall and malignity, friends to good humour, and lovers of a jest. But, upon a more serious estimation, will they not be, with far greater propriety, classed with the cruel and the selfish wretches that feel no anguish at sacrificing the happiness of mankind to the lowest views, to the poor ambition of excelling in scurrility? To deserve the exalted character of humanity and good nature, a man must mean *well*; it is not sufficient to mean *nothing*. He must act and think with generous views, not with a total disregard of all the consequences of his behaviour. Otherwise, with all his wit and all his laughter, what character can he deserve, but that of "the fool, who scatters firebrands, arrows, and death, and says, Am I not in sport?"

The consequences of this crime, whatever be the inducement to commit it, are equally pernicious.

cious. He that attacks the reputation of another invades the most valuable part of his property, and perhaps the only part which he can call his own. Calumny can take away what is out of the reach of tyranny and usurpation, and what may enable the sufferer to repair the injuries received from the hand of oppression. The persecutions of power may injure the fortune of a good man; but those of calumny must complete his ruin.

Nothing can so much obstruct the progress of virtue as the defamation of those that excel in it: for praise is one motive, even in the best minds, to superior and distinguishing degrees of goodness; and, therefore, he that reduces all men to the same state of infamy, at least deprives them of one reward which is due to merit, and takes away one incitement to it. But the effect does not terminate here. Calumny destroys that influence, and power of example, which operates much more forcibly upon the minds of men than the solemnity of laws or the fear of punishment. Our natural and real power is very small; and it is by the ascendant which he has gained, and the esteem in which he is held, that any man is able to govern others, to maintain order in society, or to perform any important service to mankind, to which the united endeavours of numbers are required. This ascendant, which, when conferred upon bad men by superiority of riches or hereditary honour, is frequently made use of to corrupt and deprave the world, to justify debauchery, and shelter villany, might be employed, if it were to be obtained only by desert, to the

noblest purposes. It might discountenance vanity and folly; it might make the fashion cooperate with the laws, and reform those upon whom reason and conviction have no force.

Calumny differs from most other injuries in this dreadful circumstance—he who commits it never can repair it. A false report may spread where a recantation never reaches; and an accusation must certainly fly faster than a defence while the greater part of mankind are base and wicked. The effects of a false report cannot be determined or circumscribed. It may check a hero in his attempts for the promotion of the happiness of his country, or a saint in his endeavours for the propagation of truth.

JOHNSON.

ON A FUTURE STATE.

HERE then, as upon a rock, the Christian takes his stand, in sure and certain hope, that the same Almighty arm, which, in the revolution of light and darkness, in the resuscitation of the vegetable world around him from the wintry grave, restores every thing to man, shall restore also man to himself. He rests assured that when his earthly tabernacle shall be resolved into dust, and return to the ground from whence it came, that by the mighty power of God the same shall rise again, and appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive its doom; and, being washed and made pure in the blood of the Lamb, shall admit a glorified and an incorruptible form. In the season of temptation, this powerful thought

shall raise him above the sink and pollutions of the flesh; in the day of disease and anguish, this shall sustain his fainting heart, this shall cheer and support his sinking spirits. In the hour of impending dissolution, will he resign with humble and unabated assurance his mortal frame to the power of death, and the corruption of the tomb. With his last breath will he join in the comforting voice of the suffering Patriarch—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another."

RENNELL.

OF TRUTH.

WHAT is truth? said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free will in thinking, as well as in acting: and though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labour which men take in finding out of truth; nor again, that, when it is found, it imposeth upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favour; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later schools of the Grecians examineth the matter,

and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets; nor for advantage, as with the merchant; but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masques, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy indisposition, and displeasing to themselves? One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy, "*vinum dæmonum*," because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie, that sinketh in and settleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making, or wooing of it; the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it; and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it; is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense;

the last was the light of reason ; and his sabbath work, ever since, is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos ; then he breathed light into the face of man ; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet that beautified the sect, that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well, “ It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea ; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof below : but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below :” so always, that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man’s mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business, it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honour of man’s nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it : for these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent ; which goeth basely upon the belly and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious : and therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the

reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge, "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much as to say that he is brave towards God, and a coward towards men: for a lie faces God, and shrinks from man." Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men: it being foretold that when "Christ cometh," he shall not "find faith upon earth."

BACON.

ON THE FLEETNESS OF LIFE.

NOT only our connexions with all things around us change, but our own life, through all its stages and conditions, is ever passing away. How just and how affecting is that image, employed in the sacred writings to describe the state of man, 'We spend our years as a tale that is told!' Psalm xc. 9. It is not to any thing great or lasting that human life is compared; not to a monument that is built, or to an inscription that is engraved; not even to a book that is written, or to a history that is recorded, but to a *tale*, which is listened to for a little; where the words are fugitive and passing, and where one incident succeeds and hangs on another, till by insensible transitions we are brought to the close; a *tale*, which in some passages may be amusing, in others tedious; but whether it amuses or fatigues, is soon told and soon forgotten. Thus year steals upon

us year after year. Life is never standing still for a moment; but continually though insensibly sliding into a new form. Infancy rises up fast to childhood; childhood to youth; youth passes quickly into manhood; and the gray hair and the faded look are not long of admonishing us that old age is at hand. In this course all generations run. The world is made up of unceasing rounds of transitory existence. Some generations are coming forward into being, and others hastening to leave it. The stream which carries us along is ever flowing with a quick current, though with a still and noiseless course. The dwelling-place of man is continually emptying, and by a fresh succession of inhabitants, continually filling anew. "The memory of man passeth away like the remembrance of a guest who hath tarried but one night."

As the life of man, considered in its duration, thus fleets and passes away, so, during the time it lasts, its condition is perpetually changing. It affords us nothing on which we can set up our rest; no enjoyment or possession which we can properly call our own. When we have begun to be placed in such circumstances as we desired, and wish our lives to proceed in the same agreeable tenour, how often comes some unexpected event across to disconcert all our schemes of happiness? Our health declines; our friends die; our families are scattered; something or other is not long of occurring to show us that the wheel must turn round; *the fashion of the world must pass away*. Is there any man who dares to look to futurity with an eye of confident hope; and to say that, against a year hence, he can promise

being in the same condition of health or fortune as he is at present? The seeds of change are every where sown in our state; and the very causes that seemed to promise us security are often secretly undermining it. Great fame provokes the attacks of envy and reproach. High health gives occasion to intemperance and disease. The elevation of the mighty never fails to render their condition tottering; and that obscurity which shelters the mean exposes them, at the same time, to become the prey of oppression. So completely is the *fashion of this world* made by Providence for change, and prepared for *passing away*. In the midst of this instability, it were some comfort, did human prosperity decay as slowly as it rises. By slow degrees, and by many intervening steps it rises. But one day is sufficient to scatter and bring it to nought.

BLAIR.

INSUFFICIENCY OF EARTHLY POSSESSIONS.

YE sons of men, if these things are even so, and ye tread every moment upon the brink of time, and live upon the eve of judgment, what avails your many cares and your unresting occupations. Will your snug dwellings, your gay clothing, and your downy beds, give freshness to the stiffened joints, or remove the disease which hath got a lodgment in your marrow and your bones? Will your full table and cool wines give edge to a jaded appetite, or remove the rancour of a rotted tooth, or supply the vigour of a worn-down

frame? Will a crowded board, and the full flow of jovial mirth, and beauty's wreathed smile, and beauty's dulcet voice, charm back to a crazy dwelling the ardours and graces of youth? Will yellow gold bribe the tongue of memory, and wipe away from the tablets of the mind the remembrance of former doings? Will worldly goods reach upwards to heaven, and bribe the pen of the recording angel that he should cancel from God's books all vestige of our crimes? Or bribe Providence, that no cold blast should come sweeping over our garden and lay it desolate? Or abrogate that eternal law, by which sin and sorrow, righteousness and peace, are bound together? Will they lift up their voice, and say wickedness shall no more beget woe, nor vice engender pain, nor indulgence end in weariness, nor the brood of sin fatten upon the bowels of human happiness, and leave wherever their snakish teeth do touch the venom and sting of remorse? And when that last most awful hour shall come, when we stand upon the brink of two worlds, and feel the earth sliding from beneath our feet, and nothing to hold on by that we should not fall into the unfathomed abyss; and when a film shall come over our eyes, shutting out from the soul, for ever, friends and favourites, and visible things; what are we, what have we, if we have not a treasure in heaven, and an establishment there? And when the deliquium of death is passed, and we find ourselves in the other world, under the eye of Him that is holy and pure, where shall we hide ourselves, if we have no protection and righteousness of Christ?

IRVING.

ON PRAYER.

IF there be any duty which our Lord Jesus Christ seems to have considered as more indispensably necessary towards the formation of a true Christian, it is that of prayer. He has taken every opportunity of impressing on our minds the absolute need in which we stand of the divine assistance, both to persist in the paths of righteousness, and to fly from the allurements of a fascinating, but dangerous life: and he has directed us to the only means of obtaining that assistance in constant and habitual appeals to the throne of Grace. Prayer is certainly the foundation stone of the superstructure of a religious life: for a man can neither arrive at true piety, nor persevere in its ways when attained, unless, with sincere and continued fervency, and with the most unaffected anxiety, he implore Almighty God to grant him his perpetual grace, to guard and restrain him from all those derelictions of heart, to which we are, by nature, but too prone. I should think it an insult to the understanding of a Christian, to dwell on the necessity of prayer, and, before we can harangue an infidel on its efficacy, we must convince him not only that the Being to whom we address ourselves really exists, but that he condescends to hear and to answer our humble supplications. As these objects are foreign to my present purpose, I shall take my leave of the necessity of prayer, as acknowledged by all to whom this paper is addressed, and shall be content to expatiate on the strong inducements

which we have to lift our souls to our Maker in the language of supplication and of praise; to depict the happiness which results to the man of true piety from the exercise of this duty; and, lastly, to warn mankind, lest their fervency should carry them into the extreme of fanaticism, and their prayers, instead of being silent and unassuming expressions of gratitude to their Maker, and humble entreaties for his favouring grace, should degenerate into clamorous vociferations and insolent gesticulations, utterly repugnant to the true spirit of prayer, and to the language of a creature addressing his Creator.

There is such an exalted delight to a regenerate being in the act of prayer, and he anticipates with so much pleasure, amid the toils of business, and the crowds of the world, the moment when he shall be able to pour out his soul without interruption into the bosom of his Maker, that I am persuaded, that the degree of desire or repugnance which a man feels to the performance of this amiable duty, is an infallible criterion of his acceptance with God. Let the unhappy child of dissipation—let the impure voluptuary boast of his short hours of exquisite enjoyment; even in the degree of bliss they are infinitely inferior to the delight of which the righteous man participates in his private devotions; while in their opposite consequences they lead to a no less wide extreme than heaven and hell, a state of positive happiness, and a state of positive misery. If there were no other inducement to prayer, than the very gratification it imparts to the soul, it would deserve to be regarded as the most impor-

tant object of a Christian; for no where else could he purchase so much calmness, so much resignation, and so much of that peace and repose of spirit in which consists the chief happiness of this otherwise dark and stormy being. But to prayer, besides the inducement of momentary gratification, the very self-love implanted in our bosoms would lead us to resort, as the chief good, for our Lord hath said, "Ask, and it shall be given to thee; knock, and it shall be opened to thee;" and not a supplication made in the true spirit of faith and humility, but shall be answered; not a request which is urged with unfeigned submission and lowliness of spirit, but shall be granted, if it be consistent with our happiness, either temporal or eternal. Of this happiness, however, the Lord God is the only judge; but this we do know, that whether our requests be granted, or whether they be refused, all is working together for our ultimate benefit.

When I say, that such of our requests and solicitations, as are urged in the true spirit of meekness, humility, and submission, will indubitably be answered, I would wish to draw a line between supplications so urged, and those violent and vehement declamations which, under the name of prayers, are sometimes heard to proceed from the lips of men professing to worship God in the spirit of meekness and truth. Surely I need not impress on any reasonable mind, how directly contrary these inflamed and bombastic harangues are to every precept of Christianity, and every idea of the deference due from a poor worm, like man, to the omnipotent and all great

God. Can we hesitate a moment as to which is more acceptable in his sight—the diffident, the lowly, the retiring, and yet solemn and impressive form of worship of our excellent church; and the wild and laboured exclamations, the authoritative and dictatory clamours of men, who, forgetting the immense distance at which they stand from the awful Being whom they address, boldly, and with unblushing front, speak to their God, as to an equal, and almost dare to prescribe to his infinite wisdom the steps it shall pursue? How often has the silent, yet eloquent eye of misery, wrung from the reluctant hand of charity that relief which has been denied to the loud and importunate beggar? And is Heaven to be taken by storm? Are we to wrest the Almighty from his purposes by vociferation and importunity? God forbid! It is a fair and a reasonable, though a melancholy inference, that the Lord shuts his ears against prayers like these, and leaves the deluded supplicants to follow the impulse of their own headstrong passions, without a guide, and destitute of every ray of his pure and holy light.

Those mock apostles, who thus disgrace the worship of the true God by their extravagance, are very fond of appearing to imitate the conduct of our Saviour, during his mortal peregrination; but how contrary were his habits to those of these deluded men! Did he teach his disciples to insult the ear of Heaven with noise and clamour? Were his precepts those of fanaticism and passion? Did he inflame the minds of his hearers with vehement and declamatory harangues? Did he pray with all this confidence—this arrogance—this assurance? How different was his con-

duct? He divested wisdom of all its pomp and parade, in order to suit it to the capacities of the meanest of its auditors. He spake to them in the lowly language of parable and similitude; and when he prayed, did he instruct his hearers to attend to him with a loud chorus of Amens? Did he (participating as he did in the Godhead), did he assume the tone of sufficiency, and the language of assurance? Far from it! he prayed, and he instructed his disciples to pray, in lowliness and meekness of spirit; he instructed them to approach the throne of Grace with fear and trembling, silently, and with the deepest awe and veneration; and he evinced by his condemnation of the prayer of the self-sufficient Pharisee, opposed to that of the diffident publican, the light in which those were considered in the eyes of the Lord, who, setting the terrors of his Godhead at defiance, and boldly building on their own worthiness, approached him with confidence and pride.

KIRKE WHITE.

ON PRIDE.

WEALTH, rank, and genius are rich gifts, often ungratefully perverted into stimulants to pride. What, however, can be less secure? Riches make themselves wings, and flee away—the crowns of princes are torn from their brows—reason often totters on her throne—and the majesty of intellect lies prostrate in the dust. But supposing them to be less fluctuating and evanescent, and that they serve to throw a certain degree of splendour round a child of dust; his dependance

and feebleness must still be felt and betrayed. Is he not a being of *yesterday*? whose "breath is in his nostrils"—whose days on earth are but a *shadow*—the sport of accident, the victim of disease, the prey of death. And is not pride in such a being, with faculties thus limited, with powers thus feeble, most absurd and preposterous?

Contemplating man then, simply as a rational, not as an immortal creature, we must conclude this vice to be highly offensive to Almighty God, who formed him from the dust, and to whom he owes "life, and breath, and all things;" for every proud man robs God of the homage due to Him alone—"erects new altars to strange deities—and by the wildest of all idolatry, burns incense to himself."

In our intercourse with the world, pride is productive of a thousand miseries and inconveniences. It places us in an attitude of hostility with our fellow creatures, and yet renders us vulnerable at every pore. It gives us an exquisite sense of our own claims, and deadens our perception of the claims of others. It is in close alliance with anger, hatred, envy, and revenge, with all those vices which may be termed anti-social. It is no less mischievous with respect to ourselves; it bribes the judgment—silences the checks of conscience—vitiates the motives to action—throws a false and delusive light over our virtues and vices, diminishing the one and magnifying the other; thus opposing a formidable barrier to improvement, by effectually concealing the necessity of repentance. ANONYMOUS.

UTILITY TO MAN OF THE POWER OF HABIT.

WHATEVER action, either good or bad, has been once done, is done a second time with more ease, and with a better liking; and a frequent repetition heightens the ease and pleasure of the performance without limit. By virtue of this property of the mind, the having done any thing once becomes a motive to the doing of it again; the having done it twice is a double motive; and so many times the act is repeated, so many times the motive to the doing of it once more is multiplied. To this principle habit owes its wonderful force, of which it is usual to hear men complain, as of something external that enslaves the will. But the complaint in this, as in every instance in which man presumes to arraign the ways of Providence, is rash and unreasonable. The fault is in man himself, if a principle implanted in him for his good, becomes, by negligence and mismanagement, the instrument of his ruin. It is owing to this principle that every faculty of the understanding, and every sentiment of the heart, is capable of being improved by exercise. It is the leading principle in the whole system of the human constitution, modifying both the physical qualities of the body, and the moral and intellectual endowments of the mind. We experience the use of it in every calling and condition of life. By this the sinews of the labourer are hardened for toil; by this the hand of the mechanic acquires its dexterity; to this we owe the

amazing progress of the human mind in the politer arts and the abstruser sciences; and an engine which it is in our power to apply to nobler and more beneficial purposes. By the same principle, when the attention is turned to moral and religious subjects, the understanding may gradually advance beyond any limit that may be assigned, in quickness of perception and truth of judgment: and the will to conform to the dictates of conscience and the decrees of reason will be gradually heightened, to correspond in some due proportion with the growth of intellect. "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou so regardest him? Thou hast made him lower than the angels to crown him with glory and honour." Destitute as he is of any original perfection, which is thy sole prerogative, who art alone in all thy qualities original, yet in the faculties of which thou hast given him the free command and use, and in the powers of habit which thou hast planted in the principles of his system, thou hast given him the capacity of infinite attainments. Weak and poor in his beginnings, what is the height of any creature's virtue, to which he has not the power, by a slow and gradual ascent, to reach? The improvements which he shall make by the vigorous exercise of the powers he has received from thee, thou permittest him to call his own, imputing to him the merit of the acquisitions which thou hast given him the ability to make. What, then, is the consummation of man's goodness but to co-operate with the benevolent purposes of his Maker, by forming the habit of his mind to a

constant ambition of improvement, which, enlarging its appetite in proportion to the acquisitions already made, may correspond with the increase of his capacities in every period of an endless existence? And to what purpose but to excite this noble thirst of virtuous proficiency—to what purpose but to provide that the object of the appetite may never be exhausted by gradual attainment—hast thou imparted to thy creature's mind the idea of thine own attribute of perfect uncreated goodness?

But man, alas! hath abused thy gifts; and the things that should have been for his peace are become to him an occasion of falling. Unmindful of the height of glory to which he might attain, he has set his affections upon earthly things.

BISHOP HORSLEY.

CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

CHRISTIAN charity is resigned under afflictions, and patient under injuries; is not hasty in retaliating, or rigorous and exact in demanding reparation for injuries received; is not ashamed to pardon or forget a wrong or dishonour done it; but esteems it its glory to pass over a transgression. It is always ready to embrace when offered, and usually the first to make overtures of friendship and reconciliation. It watches every advantage, not of persecuting or oppressing an enemy, but of winning him over to a better mind. It tries all the arts of kindness and good will to soften his resentment; endeavouring to overcome

evil with good. Where its bounty and kindness have been abused, and by the ill returns of ingratitude and injustice, it is forced to withhold its beneficence, it still continues its good wishes; it yet hopes for amendment; and, as the divine goodness is described, waits to be gracious. Where it has in its hands a power to punish the offender, and even public justice demands it, it still strikes with reluctance, and, when it punishes the offence, forgives and pities the offender.

Besides this passive virtue of forbearance, it is likewise industrious and active in doing all the good it can: charity is kind; it abounds in acts of civility and good will; delights in pleasing and obliging others. It is not of a morose and intractable disposition, averse to society, and shunning the converse of mankind; but, on the contrary, is gentle and easy to be entreated. It delights in nothing more than in communicating itself, and being useful to the world; and in bearing its part in that agreeable interchange of good offices and civilities, by which society and the order of the world is maintained. It is kindly affectioned towards all men, full of the sentiments of humanity and goodness, and indulges every friendly passion which nature has implanted in our frame. It looks with a tender eye on the miseries and distresses of others, is wakeful to the calls of pity and compassion, and is sensibly touched with a feeling of their afflictions. When an object of distress comes before it, it hastens to his relief; stays not for solicitation or importunity; but even presents him with the blessings of goodness. In a word, it takes a kind part in

the prosperity, and is a fellow sufferer in the adversity of others ; and therefore, in the next place, it envieth not.

That charity which suffereth long, is already taught to be resigned to Providence ; is not of a querulous, complaining temper, but is easily content, however moderate its condition. That charity which is kind, which interests itself with a warm concern in the welfare of others, will be less apt to repine at their superior prosperity or success. As it delights in relieving the wants and ministering to the happiness of others, so it cannot but take a pleasure in seeing those wants more richly supplied by the bounty of Heaven. It has learnt to adore the goodness of Providence, which imparts itself to all men liberally, and is abundantly shed over all his works ; and will be rather thankful for the blessings which it enjoys, than repine at those which it wants. By means of this happy temper, as it extends its own happiness, and makes it common to many, so it in return shares in some degree the prosperity of others, and makes their happiness its own, by rejoicing with them that do rejoice.

Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly. These words import a modest and inoffensive temper, which arrogates nothing to itself, and derogates nothing from others. It is not easy to separate from each other the Christian duties, which in this catalogue are so closely linked together. In the united lustre of so many shining perfections, we cannot well discern, severally and distinctly, the beauties of each. Those which are here men-

tioned, humility and sobriety of mind and behaviour, always go together, and are inseparable from that charity which considers all men as its friends and equals; and which forbids us to entertain any degree of contempt for the meanest of our fellow creatures. He, whose thoughts are taken up in admiring his own fancied perfections, seldom thinks the rest of mankind worth much of his concern; whilst the truly charitable person condescends to the poorest and meanest, and invites to his notice those who want his compassion and assistance. For this reason we find the duties of charity and humility frequently, in Scripture, placed together, as having a close dependance on each other: "Put on, therefore, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind."—"Be ye kindly affectioned one towards another in brotherly love, in honour preferring one another."

"Charity seeketh not her own;" is not intent only on its own profit or advantage, but employs much of its thoughts in consulting the good of others; does not make its own will the standard of truth, or its own interest the measure of right and wrong. It looks not only on its own things, but has regard likewise to the things of others. It is far from covetousness, and far from ambition; it is not of a fond aspiring humour, projecting schemes of greatness to itself, and pursuing them without any regard to the claims of others. In the competitions in which it may be engaged, it governs itself by the strict rules of reason and equity; thinks not the worse of any for pursuing an interest which interferes with its own, provided it be carried on with the modesty

and ingenuity which it prescribes to itself; is never willingly the author of contention, but rather will recede from the most equitable pretensions, as far as the rules of prudence and discretion will admit, than be the occasion of strife and debate. Even in the offices of humanity and beneficence, charity seeketh not her own; aims not at her own glory and applause, but terminates her views wholly in procuring the happiness, or relieving the misery of others.

The next ornament of the charitable character is that of a meek and quiet spirit; it is not easily provoked. As it allows of no degree of revenge, it endeavours in itself to suppress every motion of anger and resentment; and, as far as is possible, to live peaceably with all men. Hence it is not to be moved by little injuries or offences; and thus often defeats, in the best manner, the malice of its enemies, by resolutely preserving that tranquillity of mind which they attempt in vain to disturb. Not that the person of this character is more insensible to injuries and ill treatment than others. The man who has a general good will for mankind will be himself but too apt to set a value upon the good will and esteem of men, and cannot be unconcerned at the ill returns which, instead of this, he will sometimes meet with; but it is still slow to anger; and, when kindled on any worthy occasion, it burns not with violence, but, as a lambent flame, is gentle in its effects, and will soon be extinguished. Charity spreads a calm over the mind, which no storms of rage and passion can long interrupt or disturb; the heavenly dove dwells there, in the

heart where charity resides ; and the peace of God will rest upon it.

Charity thinketh no evil. It is not inclined to think ill of others, but puts the best and most favourable construction upon their words and actions. It does not depreciate their seeming virtues, by ill natured surmises and indirect insinuations ; it is not ingenious in finding out motives and designs, which do not appear ; but where the actions of men appear fair and commendable, supposes them to arise from the best principles, and gives them their due praise. And as it is not of itself disposed to think any evil, so neither will it hastily give credit to it on the representation of others. It will carefully examine the grounds of every relation, before it will believe any thing to the prejudice of its neighbours ; and in these instances is often harder put to it to think well of the tale-bearer, than of the person who is the subject of his censorious remarks.

Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth ; it takes no unjust advantages, nor triumphs in any success but what is obtained by the most lawful and innocent methods ; it is a stranger to artifice and dissimulation ; and places its sole strength and security in honesty and truth. It flatters not, nor applauds the vices of others, but sees with a due concern the prevailing corruption of the world, and is never more pleased than when it sees the cause of truth and virtue prosper.

W. ADAMS.

ON THE ADVANTAGE OF ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE.

In every period of life the acquisition of knowledge is one of the most pleasing employments of the human mind. But in youth there are circumstances which make it productive of higher enjoyment. It is then that everything has the charm of novelty; that curiosity and fancy are awake; and that the heart swells with the anticipations of future eminence and utility. Even in those lower branches of instruction which we call mere accomplishments, there is something always pleasing to the young in their acquisition. They seem to become every well educated person,—they adorn, if they do not dignify humanity; and what is far more, while they give an elegant employment to the hours of leisure and relaxation, they afford a means of contributing to the purity and innocence of domestic life. But in the acquisition of knowledge of a higher kind,—in the hours when the young gradually begin the study of the laws of nature, and of the faculties of the human mind, or of the magnificent revelations of the gospel,—there is a pleasure of a sublimer nature. The cloud which, in their infant years, seemed to cover nature from their view, begins gradually to resolve. The world in which they are placed opens with all its wonders upon their eye; their powers of attention and observation seem to expand with the scene before them; and, while they see, for the first

time, the immensity of the universe of God, and mark the majestic simplicity of those laws by which its operations are conducted, they feel as if they were awakened to a higher species of being, and admitted into nearer intercourse with the Author of Nature. It is this period of all others, accordingly, that must determine our hopes or fears of the future fate of the young. To feel no joy in such pursuits; to listen carelessly to the voice which brings such magnificent instruction; to see the veil raised which conceals the counsels of the Deity, and to show no emotion at the discovery, are symptoms of a weak and torpid spirit, of a mind unworthy of the advantages it possesses, and which is fitted only for the humility of sensual and ignoble pleasure. Of those, on the contrary, who distinguish themselves by the love of knowledge, who follow with ardour the career that is opened to them, we are apt to form the most honourable presages. It is the character natural to youth, and which, therefore, promises well of their maturity. We foresee for them, at least, a life of pure and virtuous enjoyment, and are willing to anticipate no common share of future usefulness and splendour.

In the second place, the pursuits of knowledge lead not only to happiness but to honour. "Length of days," in the words of the text, "is in her right hand, and in her left are riches and honour." It is honourable to excel even in the most trifling species of knowledge, in those which can amuse only the passing hour. It is more honourable to excel in those different branches of science which

are connected with the liberal professions of life, and which tend so much to the dignity and well being of humanity. It is the means of raising the most obscure to esteem and attention; it opens to the just ambition of youth some of the most distinguished and respected situations in society; and it places them there with the consoling reflection, that it is to their own industry and labour, in the providence of God, that they are alone indebted for them. But to excel in the higher attainments of knowledge,—to be distinguished in those greater pursuits which have commanded the attention, and exhausted the abilities of the wise in every former age, is perhaps, of all the distinctions of human understanding, the most honourable and grateful. When we look back upon the great men who have gone before us in every path of glory, we feel our eye turn from the career of war and of ambition, and involuntarily rest upon those who have displayed the great truths of religion, who have investigated the laws of social welfare, or extended the sphere of useful knowledge. These are honours, we feel, which have been gained without a crime, and which can be enjoyed without remorse; they are honours also which can never die,—which can shed lustre even upon the humblest head,—and to which the young of every succeeding age will look up as their brightest incentives to the pursuit of virtuous fame.

ALISON.

THE PROPER USE OF KNOWLEDGE.

THE first end to which all wisdom or knowledge ought to be employed, is to illustrate the wisdom or goodness of the Father of Nature. Every science that is cultivated by man leads naturally to religious thought, from the study of the plant that grows beneath our feet, to that of the host of heaven above us, who perform their stated revolutions in majestic silence amid the expanse of infinity. When, in the youth of Moses, "the Lord appeared to him in Horeb," a voice was heard, saying, "draw nigh hither, and put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground." It is with such a reverential awe that every great or elevated mind will approach to the study of nature, and with such feelings of adoration and gratitude, that he will receive the illumination that gradually opens upon his soul. It is not the lifeless mass of matter, he will then feel, that he is examining,—it is the mighty machine of Eternal Wisdom: the workmanship of him "in whom every thing lives, and moves, and has its being." Under an aspect of this kind, it is impossible to pursue knowledge without mingling with it the most elevated sentiments of devotion;—it is impossible to perceive the laws of nature without perceiving, at the same time, the presence and the providence of the Lawgiver: and thus it is that, in every age, the evidences of true religion have advanced with the progress of true philosophy; and that science, in erecting a monument to herself, has,

at the same time, erected an altar to the Deity. The knowledge of nature, however, is not exhausted. Here are many great discoveries yet awaiting the labours of science; and with them there are also awaiting to humanity many additional proofs of the wisdom and benevolence of "Him that made us." To the hope of these great discoveries, few, indeed, can pretend:—yet, let it ever be remembered, that he who can trace any one new fact, or can exemplify any one new instance of divine wisdom or benevolence in the system of nature, has not lived in vain; that he has added to the sum of human knowledge; and, what is far more, that he has added to the evidence of those greater truths, upon which the happiness of time and eternity depends.

The second great end to which all knowledge ought to be employed, is to the welfare of humanity. Every science is the foundation of some art beneficial to men; and while the study of it leads us to see the beneficence of the laws of nature, it calls upon us also to follow the great end of the Father of Nature in their employment and application. I need not say what a field is thus opened to the benevolence of knowledge: I need not tell you, that in every department of learning there is good to be done to mankind: I need not remind you, that the age in which we live has given us the noblest examples of this kind, and that science now finds its highest glory in improving the condition, or in allaying the miseries of humanity. But there is one thing of which it is proper ever to remind you, because the modesty of knowledge often leads us to forget:

it,—and that is, that the power of scientific benevolence is far greater than that of all others, to the welfare of society. The benevolence of the great, or the opulent, however eminent it may be, perishes with themselves. The benevolence even of sovereigns is limited to the narrow boundary of human life; and not unfrequently is succeeded by different and discordant counsels. But the benevolence of knowledge is as extensive as the race of man, and as permanent as the existence of society. He, in whatever situation he may be, who, in the study of science, has discovered a new means of alleviating pain, or of remedying disease; who has described a wiser method of preventing poverty, or of shielding misfortune; who has suggested additional means of increasing or improving the beneficent productions of nature; has left a memorial of himself which can never be forgotten; which will communicate happiness to ages yet unborn; and which, in the emphatic language of scripture, renders him a “fellow-worker” with God himself in the improvement of his creation.

The third great end of all knowledge is the improvement and exaltation of our own minds. It was the voice of the apostle, “What manner of men ought ye to be, to whom the truths of the Gospel have come?” It is the voice of nature also, “What manner of men ought ye to be, to whom the treasures of wisdom are opened?” Of all the spectacles, indeed, which life can offer us, there is none more painful, or unnatural, than that of the union of vice with knowledge. It counteracts the great designs of God in the distri-

bution of wisdom ; and it assimilates men, not to the usual characters of human frailty, but to those dark and malignant spirits who fell from heaven, and who excel in knowledge only that they may employ it in malevolence. To the wise and virtuous man, on the contrary, to him whose moral attainments have kept pace with his intellectual, and who has employed the great talent with which he is entrusted to the glory of God and to the good of humanity, are presented the sublimest prospects that mortality can know. " In my father's house," says our Saviour, " are many mansions ;" mansions, we may dare to interpret, fitted to the different powers that life has acquired, and to the uses to which they have been applied. Of that great scene, indeed, which awaits all, whether ignorant or wise, it becomes us to think with reverential awe. Yet we know " that it will then be well with the good, though it will not be well with the wicked ;" and we are led, by an instinctive anticipation, to suppose that they who here excelled in wisdom and benevolence will be rewarded with higher objects, upon which they may be employed, and admitted into nearer prospects of the government of Eternal Wisdom. " In his light they shall see light." " They shall see him, not as through a glass, darkly ; but as he is. They shall know, even as they themselves are known."

ALISON.

THE ADVANTAGE TO YOUTH FROM THE SOCIETY OF OLD AGE.

No society can be more beneficial to the young than occasional intercourse with those whom length of days hath taught wisdom, and whose comforts are derived chiefly from reason and reflection, instead of appetite and passion. Were there, indeed, no other motives to enforce it, the pleasure arising from variety would be sufficient. Unvaried gratification soon becomes tiresome and insipid ; if, therefore, we wish to cultivate true happiness, we must diversify even the rational enjoyments of life. None but the morose would debar youth from pleasure, provided it be neither vicious nor degrading ; but to retire from the scenes of festivity and joy, and anticipate the benefit of experience from the admonitions of the aged, is not only the way to enlarge the understanding and fortify the heart, but the best means of rendering the return of other pleasures innocent and delightful.

By thus furnishing the mind with various powers of enjoyment, it is prevented also from being lost in sensuality, or enslaved to the idle gratifications of vanity and pride. Taught to watch for ourselves, from the strange vicissitudes that have befallen others, we first submit to the duty, and then enjoy the benefit of thought and meditation. When the pleasures of the world are interrupted, or withdrawn, which must often be the case, we can retire without regret from what delighted the eye, or charmed the ear, and

derive comforts from a purer source ; comforts that are independent of others, and that accompany us in solitude and silence, in the season of calamity, and at the hour of death. To acquire discipline over the mind, with which so many blessings are connected, nothing can be more effectual than frequent intercourse with the aged.

Many young persons, I know, are ready to allege their gravity and moroseness, their indifference to amusements, or their condemnation of pleasure, as bars to this desirable society. But consider ; it is not an accession of spirits and vivacity that you want ; your foolish confidence and blind credulity need not be increased ; and surely the ardour of your passions and desires is already sufficiently dangerous. These require not to be inflamed, but controlled ; and we wish you to frequent the company of the aged for what you chiefly want, and they are particularly qualified to bestow ;—habits of thought and reflection, sobriety of sentiment, the warnings of experience, and the great duty of guarding against the temptation of the world.

But you must not expect at once the beauties of the spring and the fruits of autumn ; you must not be disappointed, if you do not find the wisdom of age enlivened by the gay hopes and boundless confidence of youth ; nor must you regret that the exercise of the more amiable virtue is unattended with the raptures of passion, or the endearments of sensibility. That would be as preposterous as to look for roses in December, or to expect that the setting sun should shine with the fervid splendour of noon.

Besides the gradual abatement of appetite and passion, the apathy which satiety or frequent repetition produces, and not to mention the many infirmities of the aged, there are other causes to render them, what we might call, morose, suspicious, and severe. They have seen and are assured of the folly and the danger which attend the pleasures of the world; they have often grieved, and, perhaps, suffered for the baseness and depravity of men; they have often chased the phantoms of hope, till they have vanished into air, and when other illusions supplied their place, they have grasped at happiness, perhaps, but embraced misery. Can you wonder then that prudence should sometimes teach them to apprehend evil, where you see nothing but good? And that their expectations should be moderate, their wishes sober, and their passions subdued?

HEWLETT.

THE MERE PROFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY NOT SUFFICIENT.

THE mere profession of the Gospel, which consists in outward conformity, in the indefinite assent of the understanding, will but aggravate their guilt. Christianity is a practical principle displaying itself in love and obedience to God, in active exertion for the service of man, in constant efforts after inward piety, and personal and progressive holiness. Any thing short of this is not the religion which Christ came from heaven to teach, nor will it carry us safely thither.

Oh! let those to whom life is just opening, whose hearts are full of hope, and vigour, and gaiety, pause and consider their ways, and ponder the path of their feet. They are not yet in the trammels of the world. They know nothing of the tyranny of custom, nothing of the slavery of habit. Their race is still to be run, and an immortal crown may be their portion.

Let them examine with earnestness the evidences of their religion, that they may be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them; imploring with humble fervour assistance from the fountain of all truth, and light, and knowledge: they will then receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save their souls; they will hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. But let it not be a simple adoption, a mere profession of Christianity, but an active principle, an animating spirit, diffusing itself through every thought, word, and action.

ANONYMOUS.

THE INVISIBILITY OF GOD NO ARGUMENT AGAINST HIS EXISTENCE.

Now one thing which diminishes greatly man's conviction of the being and power of God, especially with persons who do not bestow much thought upon the subject, is, that they do not see him: "No man hath seen God at any time;" and the want of this, of actually perceiving him with our senses, has a very considerable effect upon the persuasion of all who are not accus-

tomed to reflection. The evidence of our senses, or the testimony of other men's, is the strong and natural proof of the reality and existence of most things, and with many, the only proof they will attend to. To believe any thing to exist and act which yet cannot be seen or felt, and which no man hath seen or felt, requires a reach of thought which many, from want of habits of seriousness and meditation, do not attain to. We see and hear one another, and therefore doubt not of one another's existence. We do not see God and hear him, and therefore it is to reason and argument we must appeal to be satisfied of his existence. There are, I am confident, reasons and arguments, so strong and plain, that no man can well withstand them, or not have his judgment convinced by them; yet still the fact of never seeing this great being, or perceiving him with our senses, brings upon the subject a kind of suspense and hesitation. The most natural way of delivering our thoughts from any doubts on this account is, that there are many other things besides the Deity, of the existence and reality of which we have no doubt, nor can have any doubt, which nevertheless we do not see, nor can see, nor ever were seen. A stone drops to the ground: something must draw it thither—something must influence and act upon it, to cause it to fall down rather than fly upwards—to urge it constantly to seek and press towards the lowest place rather than to any other part, or in any other direction; yet no eye can see what it is that thus acts upon the stone. Shall we therefore say that nothing acts upon it? That this constant and powerful effect has no cause to produce it, because we

perceive none with our senses? This is one plain instance. There is something of vast efficacy and activity, which is spread and diffused through every part of space that we are acquainted with. Go where we will, we meet with it—in ourselves—in every thing about us. Whatever has weight (and all bodies have it more or less) feels and suffers the influence of this universal agent; yet nothing is to be seen all the while—no visible stream or fluid driving or carrying all bodies to the centre—no discernible pull or hold which drags them to it. Another similar example may be taken from the loadstone. It draws a needle towards it. Something or other must pass between it and the needle to produce this effect, yet nothing is seen. This property in the loadstone necessarily depends upon some body communicating between it and the needle, yet no communication is in the smallest degree perceptible. We cannot deny the existence of this communicating substance, because we see effects which cannot be accounted for without it; yet it is a substance as impossible to be found out by sight or touch as the essence of the Deity. The same needle which is touched with the loadstone immediately turns to the north and south—if it has liberty to move, it will rest in no other position. Now it must have received something from the loadstone to give it this new and strange property—but what? Nothing that we can discover by our senses. Examine the needle as you will, you will find nothing in it different from what it had before—no change, no addition is to be perceived—yet a great change is wrought—a great addition is made to the former properties of the

needle. What is said of the loadstone is true also of another surprising quality of bodies—electricity. By the mere rubbing of a glass or plate, a metal may be made to gather from it a quantity of something or other, so strong and violent in its effects as to kill the person who touches it; yet nothing is seen to be collected by the glass, or given to the metal—nothing is perceived to cover the surface of either, or to rest upon it, till the dreadful shock we receive from it informs us that there is something present which cannot be seen, and which, though unseen, possesses irresistible strength and efficacy. Certainly, therefore, there are in nature—near us also, and about us, pervading and filling, likewise, every part of space we are acquainted with—powerful and active substances which yet are totally invisible to human eyes. What difficulty, then, in conceiving that the great and mighty cause of all things should exist, and perceive, and act, and be present through all nature, and all regions of nature, and yet remain imperceptible to our senses otherwise than by his effects—should see all things, yet himself be unseen—should be about our path and about our bed, not far from every one of us, and yet invisible—should know what passes both around us and within us, and yet himself be concealed from our eyes? We see not our own souls—what it is within us which thinks; nor can we find it out by dissecting or scrutinizing human bodies ever so exactly; much less are our senses capable of piercing that infinite Spirit which fills and governs the universe.

PALEY.

WEALTH NOT PRODUCTIVE

OF

A PROPORTIONATE DEGREE OF ENJOYMENT.

FIRST, then, suppose a man gets all the world, what is it that he gets? It is a bubble and a fantasm, and hath no reality beyond a present transient use; a thing that is impossible to be enjoyed, because its fruits and usages are transmitted to us by parts and by succession. He that hath all the world (if we can suppose such a man) cannot have a dish of fresh summer fruits in the midst of winter, not so much as a green fig: and very much of its possessions is so hid, so fugacious, and of so uncertain purchase, that it is like the riches of the sea to the lord of the shore; all the fish and wealth within all its hollownesses are his, but he is never the better for what he cannot get: all the shell fishes that produce pearl, produce them not for him; and the bowels of the earth shall hide her treasures in undiscovered retirements: so that it will signify as much to this great purchaser to be entitled to an inheritance in the upper region of the air; he is so far from possessing all its riches, that he does not so much as know of them, nor understand the philosophy of her minerals.

I consider that he that is the greatest possessor in the world, enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection, but in common with the inferior persons, and the most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest prince enclose the sun, and set one little star in his cabinet for his own use, or secure to himself

the gentle and benign influence of any one constellation? Are not his subjects' fields bedewed with the same showers that water his gardens of pleasure?

Nay, those things which he esteems his ornament, and the singularity of his possessions, are they not of more use to others than to himself? For suppose his garments splendid and shining, like the robe of a cherub, or the clothing of the fields, all that he that wears them enjoys is, that they keep him warm, and clean, and modest; and all this is done by clean and less pompous vestments; and the beauty of them, which distinguishes him from others, is made to please the eyes of the beholders; and he is like a fair bird, or the meretricious painting of a wanton woman, made wholly to be looked on, that is, to be enjoyed by every one but himself: and the fairest face or the sparkling eye cannot perceive or enjoy their own beauties but by reflection. It is I that am pleased with beholding his gaiety; and the gay man, in his greatest bravery, is only pleased because I am pleased with the sight; so borrowing his little and imaginary complacency from the delight that I have, not from any inherency in his own possession.

The poorest artisan of Rome, walking in Cæsar's gardens, had the same pleasures which they ministered to their lord: and although, it may be, he was put to gather fruits to eat from another place, yet his other senses were delighted equally with Cæsar's: the birds made him as good music, the flowers gave him as sweet smells; he there sucked as good air, and delighted in the beauty and order of the place, for the same reason and upon

the same perception as the prince himself ; save only that Cæsar paid, for all that pleasure, vast sums of money, the blood and treasure of a province, which the poor man had for nothing.

Suppose a man lord of all the world-(for still we are but in supposition), yet since every thing is received, not according to its own greatness and worth, but according to the capacity of the receiver, it signifies very little as to our content or to the riches of our possession. If any man should give to a lion a fair meadow full of hay, or a thousand quince trees ; or should give to the goodly bull, the master and the fairest of the whole herd, a thousand fair stags ; if a man should present to a child a ship laden with Persian carpets, and the ingredients of the rich scarlet, all these, being disproportionate either to the appetite or to the understanding, could add nothing of content, and might declare the freeness of the presenter, but they upbraid the incapacity of the receiver. And so it does if God should give the whole world to any man. He knows not what to do with it ; he can use no more, but according to the capacities of a man ; he can use nothing but meat, and drink, and clothes ; and infinite riches, that can give him changes of raiment every day and a full table, do but give him a clean trencher every bit he eats ; it signifies no more but wantonness and variety, to the same, not to any new purposes. He to whom the world can be given to any purpose greater than a private estate can minister, must have new capacities created in him : he needs the understanding of an angel, to take the accounts of his estate ; he had need have a stomach like

fire or the grave, for else he can eat no more than one of his healthful subjects ; and unless he hath an eye like the sun, and a motion like that of a thought, and a bulk as big as one of the orbs of heaven, the pleasures of his eye can be no greater than to behold the beauty of a little prospect from a hill, or to look upon the heap of gold packed up in a little room, or to dote upon a cabinet of jewels, better than which there is no man that sees at all, but sees every day. For, not to name the beauties and sparkling diamonds of heaven, a man's, or a woman's, or a hawk's eye, is more beauteous and excellent than all the jewels of his crown. And when we remember that a beast, who hath quicker senses than a man, yet hath not so great delight in the fruition of any object, because he wants understanding and the power to make reflex acts upon his perception ; it will follow, that understanding and knowledge is the greatest instrument of pleasure, and he that is most knowing hath a capacity to become happy which a less knowing prince, or a rich person, hath not ; and in this only a man's capacity is capable of enlargement. But then, although they only have power to relish any pleasure rightly, who rightly understand the nature, and degrees, and essences, and ends of things ; yet they that do so, understand also the vanity and unsatisfyingness of the things of this world, so that the relish, which could not be great but in a great understanding, appears contemptible, because its vanity appears at the same time ; the understanding sees all, and sees through it.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

RELIANCE ON THE DEITY

THE

BEST SOURCE OF PATIENCE AND FORTITUDE.

THERE are few instances of particular virtue more engaging than those of this heroic cast, and if we may take the testimony of a heathen philosopher upon it, there is not an object in the world which God can be supposed to look down upon with greater pleasure than that of a good man involved in misfortunes, surrounded on all sides with difficulties,—yet cheerfully bearing up his head, and struggling against them with firmness and constancy of mind. Certainly, to our conceptions, such objects must be truly engaging,—and the reason of so exalted an encomium from this hand is easily to be guessed: no doubt, the wisest of the heathen philosophers had found, from observation upon the life of man, that the many troubles and infirmities of his nature, the sicknesses, disappointments, sorrow for the loss of children or property, with the numberless other calamities and cross accidents to which the life of man is subject, were in themselves so *great*;—and so *little* solid comfort to be administered from the mere refinements of philosophy in such emergencies, that there was no virtue which required greater efforts, or which was found so difficult to be achieved upon moral principles,—upon moral principles, which had no foundation to sustain this great weight which the infirmities of our nature laid upon it:—and,

for this reason, it is observable that there is no subject upon which the moral writers of antiquity have exhausted so much of their eloquence, or where they have spent such time and pains, as in this of endeavouring to reconcile men to these evils; insomuch that from thence in most modern languages, the patient enduring of affliction has, by degrees, obtained the name of philosophy, and almost monopolized the word to itself, as if it was the chief end or compendium of all the wisdom which philosophy had to offer. And indeed, considering what lights they had, some of them wrote exceedingly well; yet, as what they said proceeded more from the head than the heart, it was generally more calculated to silence a man in his troubles than to convince and teach him how to bear them; and, therefore, however subtle and ingenious their arguments might appear in the reading, it is to be feared they lost much of their efficacy when tried in the application. If a man was thrust back in the world by disappointments, or, as was Job's case, had suffered a sudden change in his fortunes, and from an affluent condition was brought down by a train of cruel accidents, and pinched with poverty,—philosophy would come in and exhort him to stand his ground;—it would tell him that the same greatness and strength of mind which enabled him to behave well in the days of his prosperity, should equally enable him to behave well in the days of his adversity;—that it was the property of only weak and base spirits, who were insolent in the one, to be dejected and overthrown by the other; whereas, great and generous souls

were at all times calm and equal : as they enjoyed the advantages of life with indifference, they were able to resign them with the same temper ;—and, consequently, were out of the reach of fortune. All which, however fine, and likely to satisfy the fancy of a man at ease, could convey but little consolation to a heart already pierced with sorrow ; nor is it to be conceived how an unfortunate creature should any more receive relief from such a lecture, however just, than a man racked with an acute fit of the gout or stone could be supposed to be set free from torture by hearing from his physicians a nice dissertation upon his case. The philosophic consolations in sickness, or in afflictions for the death of friends and kindred, were just as efficacious ;—and were rather, in general, to be considered as good sayings than good remedies ;—so that, if a man was bereaved of a promising child, in whom all his hopes and expectations centred,—or a wife was left destitute to mourn the loss and protection of a kind and tender husband ; Seneca or Epictetus would tell the pensive parent and disconsolate widow, that tears and lamentations for the dead were fruitless and absurd !—that to die was the necessary and unavoidable debt of nature ;—and, as it could admit of no remedy, 'twas impious and foolish to grieve and fret themselves upon it. Upon such sage counsel, as well as many other lessons of the same stamp, the same reflection might be applied, which is said to have been made by one of the Roman emperors to one who administered the same consolations to him on a like occasion ; to whom advising him to be com-

forted, and make himself easy, since the event had been brought about by fatality, and could not be helped, he replied, "That this was so far from lessening his trouble, that it was the very circumstance which occasioned it." So that, upon the whole, when the true value of these, and many more of their current arguments, have been weighed and brought to the test, one is led to doubt whether the greatest part of their heroes, the most renowned for constancy, were not much more indebted to good nerves and good spirits, or the natural happy frame of their tempers, for behaving well, than to any extraordinary helps which they could be supposed to receive from their instructors: and, therefore, I should make no scruple to assert, that one such instance of patience and resignation as this, which the Scripture gives us in the person of Job, not of one most pompously declaiming upon the contempt of pain and poverty, but of a man sunk in the lowest condition of humanity, to behold him when stripped of his estate, his wealth, his friends, his children, cheerfully holding up his head, and entertaining his hard fortune with firmness and serenity, and that not from a stoical stupidity, but a just sense of God's providence, and a persuasion of his justice and goodness in all his dealings; such an example, I say, as this is of more universal use, speaks truer to the heart than all the heroic precepts which the pedantry of philosophy has to offer.

STERNE.

THE WISDOM OF PERSEVERING IN OUR ACTIVE DUTIES.

EVERY man of understanding acknowledges some obligation to apply our talents to the business of human life, or to the ends of our probation for the world to come, as long as we are capable of exercising them. It is impossible seriously to doubt that our personal duties must be indispensable, as long as we have the means of fulfilling them.

But when the doctrine is applied to practice, we are apt to take very different views of the subject. Though it is a truth fully established by experience, that it is best for every man, in the present life, and most for his advantage as an immortal being, to persevere in the active duties of his condition, as long as it is possible for him to discharge them ; there is nothing which men more generally allow to dwell on their thoughts through life, than the idea, that a time shall come, long before they die, when they shall be able to relinquish their usual or professional occupations, and to spend the rest of their time, without labour or exertion, in the enjoyment of their private or domestic situations. Few in comparison are ever permitted to realize an idea which so many allow to occupy their imaginations. Of those who are enabled to relinquish their labours, if their lives are prolonged, the greater part have reason to repent what they have done. By the change produced on their habits, and by want of use, their faculties are gradually impaired, as the sources of their activity are diminished ; and

they meet with chagrin and disappointment, where they expected to have found nothing but satisfaction or tranquillity.

I do not say that those who have retired from the bustle of affairs cannot employ, and employ faithfully, "the fragments" both of their health and their vigour. They have certainly much in their power, if they consecrate their leisure to real duties, and keep their talents occupied as they ought to be ; much which relates to the discipline of their own minds ; much which can be done in domestic life, for the advantage of the old or of the young, to whom they can give their attention or their time ; much by which they can be useful to those whose characters they can influence, whose hands they can strengthen ; whom they can assist in their difficulties, or comfort in their sickness, or furnish with the means either of prosperity or of religion.

Those who apply the decline of life to such purposes as these, do not retire in vain from the bustle of the world. If they embrace heartily the opportunities of usefulness they still possess, nothing is lost which they are capable of attaining. That which they do in secret for the glory of God, or for the advantage of their fellow mortals, is sanctified by the prayer of faith, and shall be accounted to them as good service in "the day of Christ."

But though I say this, I have no hesitation to add, that those who abide by their active occupations from a sense of duty, and who employ the last portion of their talents where they spent their vigour, have much better reason to expect that

both their usefulness and their personal comfort shall be continued as long as they live.

No good man's conscience will suggest to him that he ought to become weary of his labours. He who delights in the service on which his duty or his usefulness depends, can have no wish to relinquish it. He is anxious to persevere in the duties which he can in any degree accomplish, even when he is conscious of his decline. He looks up to God, to whom he thinks he shall soon return; and though he knows that his summons to die cannot be distant, it continues to be the first wish of his heart that he may be found employing the last portions of his health and life in the duties of his proper place.

A man who is able to preserve this happy temper of mind to the end, has a far better prospect, than other habits could afford him, of possessing the vigour of his faculties to his last hour; and therefore of extending his labours and his usefulness far beyond the ordinary term of human activity. He hears the voice of his Master, urging his duties and his fidelity on his conscience, till his strength is gone: and he does not lose the impression of it till the last spark of life expires.

SIR HENRY WELLWOOD.

ELEGANT EXTRACTS

FROM THE MOST EMINENT
PROSE WRITERS.

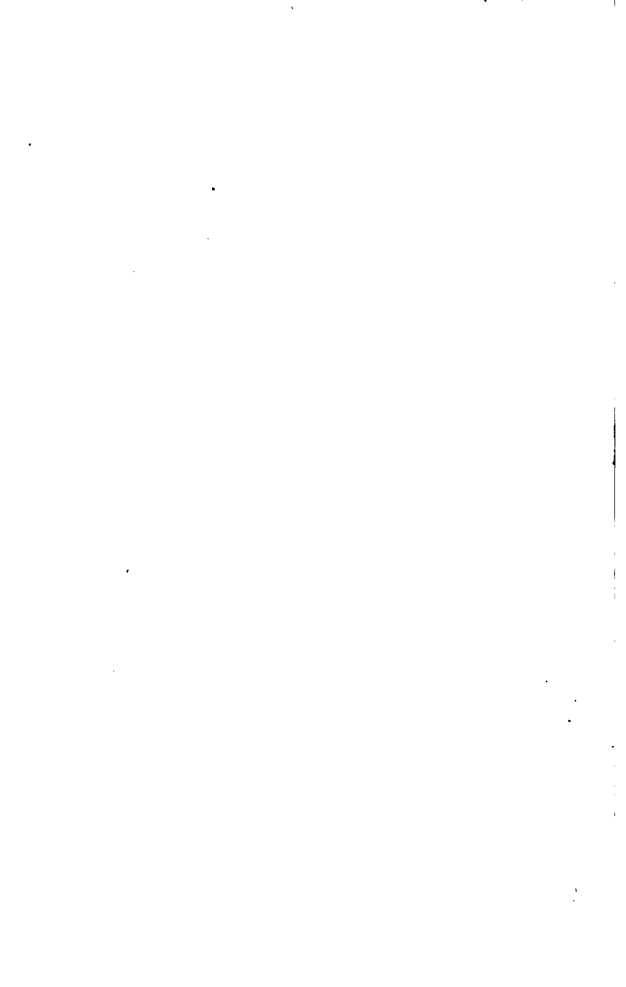
PART II.
TALES, ALLEGORIES, ETC.



The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all
her form. p. 223.

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ELEGANT EXTRACTS.

PART II.

Tales, Allegories, &c.

MORAL AND SERIOUS.

THE HERMIT OF THE ATHYRAS.

WHILE the seat of empire was yet at Byzantium, and that city was the centre, not only of dominion, but of learning and politeness, a certain hermit had fixed his residence in a cell, on the banks of the Athyras, at the distance of about ten miles from the capital. The spot was retired, although so near the great city, and was protected as well by woods and precipices as by the awful reverence with which, at that time, all ranks beheld the character of a recluse. Indeed, the poor old man, who tenanted the little hollow, at the summit of a crag, beneath which the Athyras rolls its impetuous torrent, was not famed for the severity of his penances, or the strictness of his mortifications. That he was either studious, or protracted his devotions to a late hour, was evident, for his lamp was often

seen to stream through the trees which shaded his dwelling, when accident called any of the peasants from their beds at unseasonable hours. Be this as it may, no miracles were imputed to him; the sick rarely came to petition for the benefit of his prayers, and though some both loved him and had good reason for loving him, yet many undervalued him for the want of that very austerity which the old man seemed most desirous to avoid.

It was evening, and the long shadows of the Thracian mountains were extending still farther and farther along the plains, when this old man was disturbed in his meditations by the approach of a stranger. "How far is it to Byzantium?" was the question put by the traveller. "Not far to those who know the country," replied the hermit; "but a stranger would not easily find his way through the windings of these woods, and the intricacies of the plains beyond them. Do you see that blue mist which stretches along the bounding line of the horizon as far as the trees will permit the eye to trace it? That is the Propontis: and higher up, on the left, the city of Constantinople rears its proud head above the waters. But I would dissuade thee, stranger, from pursuing thy journey farther to-night. Thou mayest rest in the village, which is half way down the hill; or if thou wilt share my supper of roots, and put up with a bed of leaves, my cell is open to thee."—"I thank thee, father," replied the youth; "I am weary with my journey, and will accept thy proffered hospitality." They ascended the rock together. The hermit's cell

was the work of nature. It penetrated far into the rock, and in the innermost recess was a little chapel, furnished with a crucifix and a human skull, the objects of the hermit's nightly and daily contemplation, for neither of them received his adoration. That corruption had not as yet crept into the Christian church. The hermit now lighted up a fire of dry sticks (for the nights are very piercing in the regions about the Hellespont and the Bosphorus), and then proceeded to prepare their vegetable meal. While he was thus employed, his young guest surveyed, with surprise, the dwelling which he was to inhabit for the night. A cold rock-hole on the bleak summit of one of the Thracian hills, seemed to him a comfortless choice for a weak and solitary old man. The rude materials of his scanty furniture still more surprised him. A table fixed to the ground, a wooden bench, an earthen lamp, a number of rolls of papyrus and vellum, and a heap of leaves in a corner, the hermit's bed, were all his stock. "Is it possible," at length he exclaimed, "that you can tenant this comfortless cave, with these scanty accommodations, through choice? Go with me, old man, to Constantinople, and receive from me those conveniences which befit your years."—"And what art thou going to do at Constantinople, my young friend?" said the hermit; "for thy dialect bespeaks thee a native of more southern regions. Am I mistaken, art thou not an Athenian?"—"I am an Athenian," replied the youth, "by birth, but I hope I am not an Athenian in vice. I have left my degenerate birth-place in quest of happiness. I have learned from

my master Speusippus, a genuine assertor of the much belied doctrines of Epicurus, that as a future state is a mere phantom and vagary of the brain, it is the only true wisdom to enjoy life while we have it. But I have learned from him also, that virtue alone is true enjoyment. I am resolved, therefore, to enjoy life, and that too with virtue, as my companion and guide. My travels are begun with the design of discovering where I can best unite both objects: enjoyment the most exquisite, with virtue the most perfect. You perhaps may have reached the latter, my good father; the former you have certainly missed. To-morrow I shall continue my search. At Constantinople I shall laugh and sing with the gay, meditate with the sober, drink deeply of every unpolluted pleasure, and taste all the fountains of wisdom and philosophy. I have heard much of the accomplishments of the women of Byzantium. With us females are mere household slaves; here, I am told, they have *minds*. I almost promise myself that I shall marry and settle at Constantinople, where the loves and graces seem alone to reside, and where even the *women* have *minds*. My good father, how the wind roars about this aerial nest of yours, and here you sit during the long cold nights, all alone, cold and cheerless, when Constantinople is just at your feet, with all its joys, its comforts, and its elegancies. I perceive that the philosophers of our sect, who succeeded Epicurus, were right, when they taught that there might be virtue without enjoyment, and that virtue without enjoyment it not worth the having."

The face of the youth kindled with animation as he spake these words, and he visibly enjoyed the consciousness of superior intelligence. The old man sighed and was silent. As they ate their frugal supper, both parties seemed involved in deep thought. The young traveller was dreaming of the Byzantine women: his host seemed occupied with far different meditations. "So you are travelling to Constantinople in search of happiness?" at length exclaimed the hermit; "I too have been a suitor of that divinity, and it may be of use to you to hear how I have fared. The history of my life will serve to fill up the interval before we retire to rest, and my experience may not prove altogether useless to one who is about to go the same journey which I have finished.

"These scanty hairs of mine were not always gray, nor these limbs decrepid: I was once, like thee, young, fresh, and vigorous, full of delightful dreams and gay anticipations. Life seemed a garden of sweets, a path of roses; and I thought I had but to choose in what way I would be happy. I will pass over the incidents of my boyhood, and come to my maturer years. I had scarcely seen twenty summers, when I formed one of those extravagant and ardent attachments, of which youth is so susceptible. It happened that, at that time, I bore arms under the emperor Theodosius, in his expedition against the Goths, who had overrun a part of Thrace. In our return from a successful campaign, we staid some time in the Greek cities, which border on the Euxine. In one of these cities I became acquainted with a female, whose form was not more elegant than

her mind was cultivated, and her heart untainted. I had done her family some trivial services, and her gratitude spoke too warmly to my intoxicated brain to leave any doubt on my mind that she loved me. The idea was too exquisitely pleasing to be soon dismissed. I sought every occasion of being with her. Her mild persuasive voice seemed like the music of heaven to my ears, after the toils and roughness of a soldier's life. I had a friend too, whose converse, next to that of the dear object of my secret love, was most dear to me. He formed the third in all our meetings, and beyond the enjoyment of the society of these two, I had not a wish. I had never yet spoken explicitly to my female friend, but I fondly hoped we understood each other. Why should I dwell on the subject? I was mistaken. My friend threw himself on my mercy. I found that he, not I, was the object of her affections. Young man, you may conceive, but I cannot describe what I felt, as I joined their hands. The stroke was severe, and, for a time, unfitted me for the duties of my station. I suffered the army to leave the place without accompanying it: and thus lost the rewards of my past services, and forfeited the favour of my sovereign. This was another source of anxiety and regret to me, as my mind recovered its wonted tone. But the mind of youth, however deeply it may feel for a while, eventually rises up from dejection, and regains its wonted elasticity. That rigour by which the spirit recovers itself from the depths of useless regret, and enters upon new prospects with its accustomed ardour, is only subdued by time. I

now applied myself to the study of philosophy, under a Greek master, and all my ambition was directed towards letters. But ambition is not quite enough to fill a young man's heart. I still felt a void there, and sighed as I reflected on the happiness of my friend. At the time when I visited the object of my first love, a young Christian woman, her frequent companion, had sometimes taken up my attention. She was an Ionian, by birth, and had all the softness and pensive intelligence which her countrywomen are said to possess when unvitiated by the corruptions so prevalent in that delightful region. You are no stranger to the contempt with which the Greeks then treated, and do still, in some places, treat the Christians. This young woman bore that contempt with a calmness which surprised me. There were then but few converts to that religion in those parts, and its profession was therefore more exposed to ridicule and persecution from its strangeness. Notwithstanding her religion, I thought I could love this interesting and amiable female, and, in spite of my former mistake, I had the vanity to imagine I was not indifferent to her. As our intimacy increased, I learned, to my astonishment, that she regarded me as one involved in ignorance and error : and that, although she felt an affection for me, yet she would never become my wife, while I remained devoted to the religion of my ancestors. Piqued at this discovery, I received the books, which she now for the first time put into my hands, with pity and contempt. I expected to find them nothing but the repositories of a miserable and deluded super-

stition, more presuming than the mystical leaves of the Sibyls, or the obscure triads of Zoroaster. How was I mistaken! There was much which I could not at all comprehend; but in the midst of this darkness, the effect of my ignorance, I discerned a system of morality, so exalted, so exquisitely pure, and so far removed from all I would have conceived of the most perfect virtue, that all the philosophy of the Grecian world seemed worse than dross in the comparison. My former learning had only served to teach me that something was wanting to complete the systems of philosophers. Here that invisible link was supplied, and I could even then observe a harmony and consistency in the whole which carried irresistible conviction to my mind. I will not enlarge on this subject. Christianity is not a mere set of opinions to be embraced by the understanding. It is the work of the heart as well as the head. Let it suffice to say that, in time, I became a Christian, and the husband of Sapphira.

KIRKE WHITE.

MARGARET.

MARGARET had arranged every thing after her frugal dinner was finished, and she sat down to work at her cottage window. She had worked some time, when her little girl, who was then playing near her, asked her to walk out. "Wait a little while, my love," said Margaret; "wait till I have finished my work, and we will go." The little girl was shortly repaid for the patience

with which she sat down near her mother, quietly waiting till she was ready. They were soon on the smooth seashore. It was a clear calm afternoon in October; the clouds, which had rendered the morning wet and gloomy, had passed away, and the sun shone brightly on the gently agitated waves, which bore every now and then to the sparkling pebbly shore (and left there frequently) their fringe of surf and seaweeds. They lingered long by the seaside, for Margaret thought there was a distant chance of her husband's boat returning earlier than usual. "My father will not come yet, mother," said her little girl, "if you are looking for him."—"No, he will not, my dear," answered Margaret, who had stood, forgetful of every thing else, gazing on the sea; "We will go home." They returned, and Margaret sat again with her work, by the open window, singing cheerfully to her child. At last she found that her eyes became a little wearied, and the light was growing dim; on looking out of the window, she perceived that the sun was sinking into the western waves: no little snowy sail, however, appeared in the distance; she put her child to bed; she left the bedroom door partly open, and sang very softly; the smiling child soon fell asleep, hearing only, for a short time, her mother's sweet voice. Margaret ceased singing, for it became darker. The sun had quite set, and a long broken line of crimson light alone blended with the dark lead-coloured ocean; the same hue melted into the dusky sky. It grew darker and darker: Margaret leaned her whole head out of the window, and strained her sight;

but she could now see nothing. Turning her head partly round, she listened; but even the faint breeze, which had curled the waves so slightly, had died away; the dull sudden dash of the heavy billows, as they fell upon the shore, was alone heard by her. "What a delightful evening," said the affectionate wife, as she saw the bright beacon flame sparkle into light: "Oh, he will soon be home." She shut the window, stirred the dull embers of her fire, and put on a fresh pile of turf; she lit her candle, and placed it on the window, that the light might assist the blazing fire to illumine the room. She always lighted her cottage windows, to make them a beacon to her husband.—Margaret sat down again, and began to grow a little anxious; there were many books lying on the table; but, though one that she had been reading was still open, she felt that she could not, that she dared not open any book but the Bible; she opened it hastily and gladly: almost angry with herself for having thought of reading any other. She turned to the second chapter of Jeremiah, and her eye wandered over the page, till it rested on the twenty-fifth verse. "Yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, surely his anger will turn from me; behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned." She stopped and sighed deeply; for she remembered that she had, but a few days before, felt a sort of false pride and confidence in herself, because, in recalling her past life, she did not remember having committed any crime. "I had quite forgotten," she said to herself, "I had quite forgotten how often

I had been ungrateful to God ; how often I have been unjust to my neighbour, and ill tempered ; and how far I have fallen short of the divine example, which my Saviour has given me."

She continued sad and thoughtful, regarding nothing, till, as the abstraction of her mind slowly dissipated, she was roused by the unwearied clicking of the clock, which, with that faint noise, we are unable to account for, in a dying fire, alone broke upon the perfect stillness of every thing around her ; her eyes had been unconsciously fixed upon the dial ; she had only now noticed the lateness of the hour, and starting up, she again made up the fire, and opened the window. The beacon no longer twinkled brightly, she saw only a dull red spot, which grew gradually fainter, and at last entirely vanished. Snatching up the candle, she went out, but a lurid halo encircled its flame as she held it over her head and looked around ; a deep fog was becoming thicker, she could hardly distinguish the blaze which brightened her cottage windows : slowly and sadly she returned, listening as she walked back ; but no voice, no step was heard. Many, many fears rushed over her mind ; and no hope, that she could be of any use to her husband came with those fears : in a storm, she could have depended upon the beacon being seen : she could now do nothing ; her cottage could not be left with her unprotected child ; and with the fear of not being able to return through the fog, she could not carry out her child with her, when even to guide her own steps would be a task of difficulty and danger. The surges sounded more

faintly, and she remembered that the tide was going out, and that the rocks near the shore, at low tide, presented dangers which she dreaded to think of. "Oh! he will perish," she cried; "and I can do nothing.—Nothing?" she added, as she looked at the open Bible; "Oh, yes," she said, "there is one who is a present hope in time of trouble." In an instant, she recollected her superstition in consulting the Word of God before as a mere book of fate. "Ought I," said she, "when reading this book, to have doubted? What is the proof of my religion, my faith in God's goodness, when I thus allow my hopes to die away? Does it not say, 'Commune with your own heart, and be still?' 'Be not afraid, only believe.'—I do, I do believe," she said, and calmly knelt down. She prayed long and fervently, and, on rising up, felt her mind composed and prepared, gently repeating to herself, "only believe." Taking the candle, she entered her child's room: she gazed at its little smiling lips, the eyes just shining through their long dark eyelashes; and the rosy cheek, which pressed the swelling pillow beneath it; and was quite happy. Margaret was still looking at her sleeping child, when his voice was heard at the cottage door.

ANONYMOUS.

THE VISION OF THEODORE.

Son of Perseverence, whosoever thou art, whose curiosity has led thee hither, read and be wise. He that now calls upon thee is Theodore, the Hermit of Teneriffe, who, in the fifty-seventh

year of his retreat, left this instruction to mankind, lest his solitary hours should be spent in vain.

I was once what thou art now, a groveller on the earth, and a gazer at the sky; I trafficked and heaped wealth together; I loved and was favoured; I wore the robe of honour, and heard the music of adulation; I was ambitious, and rose to greatness; I was unhappy, and retired. I sought for some time, what I at length found here, a place where all real wants might be easily supplied, and where I might not be under the necessity of purchasing the assistance of men by the toleration of their follies. Here I saw fruits and herbs and water, and here determined to wait the hand of death, which, I hope, when at last it comes, will fall lightly upon me.

Forty-eight years had I now passed in forgetfulness of all mortal cares, and without any inclination to wander farther than the necessity of procuring sustenance required; but as I stood one day beholding the rock that overhangs my cell, I found in myself a desire to climb it; and when I was on its top, was in the same manner determined to scale the next, till, by degrees, I conceived a wish to view the summit of the mountain, at the foot of which I had so long resided. This motion of my thoughts I endeavoured to suppress, not because it appeared criminal, but because it was new; and all change, not evidently for the better, alarms a mind taught by experience to distrust itself. I was often afraid that my heart was deceiving me, that my impatience of confinement rose from some earthly passion,

and that my ardour to survey the works of nature was only a hidden longing to mingle once again in the scenes of life. I therefore endeavoured to settle my thoughts into their former state, but found their distraction every day greater. I was always reproaching myself with the want of happiness within my reach ; and at length began to question whether it was not laziness rather than caution that restrained me from climbing to the summit of Teneriffe.

I rose therefore before the day, and began my journey up the steep of the mountain : but I had not advanced far, old as I was, and burdened with provisions, when the day began to shine upon me ; the declivities grew more precipitous, and the sand slid from beneath my feet ; at last, fainting with labour, I arrived at a small plain almost enclosed by rocks, and open only to the east. I sat down to rest awhile, in full persuasion that, when I had recovered my strength, I should proceed on my design ; but when once I had tasted ease, I found many reasons against disturbing it. The branches spread a shade over my head, and the gales of spring wafted odours to my bosom.

As I sat thus, forming alternately excuses for delay, and resolutions to go forward, an irresistible heaviness suddenly surprised me ; I laid my head upon the bank, and resigned myself to sleep ; when, methought, I heard the sound as of the flight of eagles, and a being of more than human dignity stood before me. While I was deliberating how to address him, he took me by the hand with an air of kindness, and asked me

solemnly, but without severity, "Theodore, whither art thou going?"—"I am climbing," answered I, "to the top of the mountain, to enjoy a more extensive prospect of the works of nature."—"Attend, first," said he, "to the prospect which this place affords, and what thou dost not understand I will explain. I am one of the benevolent beings who watch over the children of the dust, to preserve them from those evils which will not ultimately terminate in good, and which they do not, by their own faults, bring upon themselves. Look round, therefore, without fear: observe, contemplate, and be instructed."

Encouraged by this assurance, I looked, and beheld a mountain higher than Teneriffe, to the summit of which the human eye could never reach: when I had tired myself with gazing upon its height, I turned my eyes towards its foot, which I could easily discover, but was amazed to find it without foundation, and placed inconceivably in emptiness and darkness. Thus I stood terrified and confused; above were tracts instable, and below was total vacuity. But my protector, with a voice of admonition, cried out, "Theodore, be not affrighted, but raise thine eyes again; the Mountain of Existence is before thee, survey it, and be wise."

I then looked with more deliberate attention, and observed the bottom of the mountain to be a gentle rise, overspread with flowers; the middle to be more steep, embarrassed with crags, and interrupted by precipices, over which hung branches loaded with fruits, among which were scattered palaces and bowers. The tracts which

my eyes could reach nearest the top were generally barren ; but there were among the clefts of the rocks a few hardy evergreens, which, though they did not give much pleasure to the sight or smell, yet seemed to cheer the labour and facilitate the steps of those who were clambering among them.

Then, beginning to examine more minutely the different parts, I observed, at a great distance, a multitude of both sexes issuing into view from the bottom of the mountain. Their first actions I could not accurately discern ; but, as they every moment approached nearer, I found that they amused themselves with gathering flowers under the superintendence of a modest virgin in a white robe, who seemed not over solicitous to confine them to any settled place or certain track ; for she knew that the whole ground was smooth and solid, and that they could not easily be hurt or bewildered. When, as it often happened, they plucked a thistle for a flower, Innocence, so was she called, would smile at the mistake. Happy, said I, are they who are under so gentle a government, and yet are safe. But I had no opportunity to dwell long on the consideration of their felicity, for I found that Innocence continued her attendance but a little way, and seemed to consider only the flowery bottom of the mountain as her proper province. Those whom she abandoned scarcely knew that they were left, before they perceived themselves in the hands of Education, a nymph more severe in her aspect and imperious in her commands, who confined them to certain paths, in their own opinion too narrow and too

rough. These they were continually solicited to leave, by Appetite, whom Education could never fright away, though she sometimes awed her to such timidity, that the effects of her presence were scarcely perceptible. Some went back to the first part of the mountain, and seemed desirous of continuing busied in plucking flowers, but were no longer guarded by Innocence; and such as Education could not force back, proceeded up the mountain by some miry road, in which they were seldom seen, and scarcely ever regarded.

As Education led her troop up the mountain, nothing was more observable than that she was frequently giving them cautions to beware of Habits; and was calling out to one or other at every step, that a Habit was ensnaring them; that they would be under the dominion of Habit before they perceived their danger; and that those whom Habit should once subdue, had little hope of regaining their liberty.

Of this caution, so frequently repeated, I was very solicitous to know the reason, when my protector directed my regard to a troop of pigmies, which appeared to walk silently before those that were climbing the mountain, and each to smooth the way before her follower. I found that I had missed the notice of them before, both because they were so minute as not easily to be discerned, and because they grew every moment nearer in their colour to the objects with which they were surrounded. As the followers of Education did not appear to be sensible of the presence of these dangerous associates, or ridiculing

their diminutive size, did not think it possible that human beings should ever be brought into subjection by such feeble enemies, they generally heard her precepts of vigilance with wonder; and, when they thought her eye withdrawn, treated them with contempt. Nor could I myself think her cautions so necessary as her frequent inculcations seemed to suppose, till I observed that each of these petty beings held secretly a chain in her hand, with which she prepared to bind those whom she found within her power. Yet these Habits, under the eye of Education, went quickly forward, and seemed very little to increase in bulk or strength; for though they were always willing to join with Appetite, yet when Education kept them apart from her, they would very punctually obey command, and make the narrow roads in which they were confined easier and smoother.

It was observable that their stature was never at a stand, but continually growing or decreasing, yet not always in the same proportions: nor could I forbear to express my admiration, when I saw in how much less time they generally gained than lost bulk. Though they grew slowly in the road of Education, it might, however, be perceived that they grew; but if they once deviated at the call of Appetite, their stature soon became gigantic; and their strength was such, that Education pointed out to her tribe many that were led in chains by them, whom she could never more rescue from their slavery. She pointed them out, but with little effect; for all her pupils appeared confident of their own superiority to

the strongest Habit, and some seemed in secret to regret that they were hindered from following the triumph of Appetite.

It was the peculiar artifice of Habit not to suffer her power to be felt at first. Those whom she led, she had the address of appearing only to attend, but was continually doubling her chains upon her companions, which were so slender in themselves, and so silently fastened, that while the attention was engaged by other objects, they were not easily perceived. Each link grew tighter as it had been longer worn ; and when by continual additions they became so heavy as to be felt, they were very frequently too strong to be broken.

When Education had proceeded in this manner to the part of the mountain where the declivity began to grow craggy, she resigned her charge to two powers of superior aspect. The meaner of them appeared capable of presiding in senates or governing nations, and yet watched the steps of the other with the most anxious attention, and was visibly confounded and perplexed if ever she suffered her regard to be drawn away. The other seemed to approve her submission as pleasing, but with such a condescension as plainly showed that she claimed it as due ; and, indeed, so great was her dignity and sweetness, that he who would not reverence, must not behold.

“ Theodore,” said my protector, “ be fearless, and be wise ; approach these powers, whose dominion extends to all the remaining part of the Mountain of Existence.” I trembled, and ventured to address the inferior nymph, whose eyes,

though piercing and awful, I was not able to sustain. "Bright power," said I, "by whatever name it is lawful to address thee, tell me, thou who presidest here, on what condition thy protection will be granted?"—"It will be granted," said she, "only to obedience. I am Reason; of all subordinate beings the noblest and the greatest; who, if thou wilt receive my laws, will reward thee like the rest of my votaries, by conducting thee to Religion."

Charmed by her voice and aspect, I professed my readiness to follow her. She then presented me to her mistress, who looked upon me with tenderness. I bowed before her, and she smiled.

When Education delivered up those for whose happiness she had been so long solicitous, she seemed to expect that they should express some gratitude for her care, or some regret at the loss of that protection which she had hitherto afforded them. But it was easy to discover, by the alacrity which broke out at her departure, that her presence had been long displeasing, and that she had been teaching those who felt in themselves no want of instruction. They all agreed in rejoicing that they should no longer be subject to her caprices, or disturbed by her documents, but should be now under the direction only of Reason, to whom they made no doubt of being able to recommend themselves by a steady adherence to all her precepts. Reason counseled them, at their first entrance upon her province, to enlist themselves among the votaries of Religion; and informed them, that if they trusted to her alone, they would find the same fate with her other

admirers, whom she had not been able to secure against Appetites and Passions; and who, having been seized by Habits in the regions of Desire, had been dragged away to the caverns of Despair. Her admonition was vain, the greater number declared against any other direction; and doubted not but by her superintendence they should climb with safety up the Mountain of Existence.

"My power," said Reason, "is to advise, not to compel; I have already told you the danger of your choice. The path seems now plain and even; but there are asperities and pitfalls, over which Religion only can conduct you. Look upwards and you perceive a mist before you, settled upon the highest visible part of the mountain; a mist, by which my prospect is terminated, and which is pierced only by the eyes of Religion. Beyond it are the temples of Happiness, in which those who climb the precipice by her direction, after the toil of their pilgrimage, repose for ever. I know not the way, and therefore can only conduct you to a better guide. Pride has sometimes reproached me with the narrowness of my view; but, when she endeavoured to extend it, could only show me, below the mist, the bowers of Content; even they vanished as I fixed my eyes upon them: and those whom she persuaded to travel towards them were enchanted by Habits, and engulfed by Despair, a cruel tyrant, whose caverns are beyond the darkness on the right side and on the left, from whose prisons none can escape, and whom I cannot teach you to avoid."

Such was the declaration of Reason to those

who demanded her protection. Some that recollected the dictates of Education, finding them now seconded by another authority, submitted with reluctance to the strict decree, and engaged themselves among the followers of Religion, who were distinguished by the uniformity of their march, though many of them were women; and by their continual endeavours to move upwards without appearing to regard the prospects which at every step courted their attention.

All those who determined to follow either Reason or Religion, were continually importuned to forsake the road, sometimes by Passions, and sometimes by Appetites, of whom both had reason to boast the success of their artifices; for so many were drawn into by-paths, that any way was more populous than the right. The attacks of the Appetites were more impetuous, those of the Passions long continued. The Appetites turned their followers directly from the true way, but the Passions marched at first in a path nearly in the same direction with that of Reason; but deviated by slow degrees, till at last they entirely changed their course. Appetite drew aside the dull, and Passion the sprightly. Of the Appetites, Lust was the strongest; and of the Passions, Vanity. The most powerful assault was to be feared, when a Passion and an Appetite joined their enticements; and the path of Reason was best followed, when a Passion called to one side and an Appetite to the other.

These seducers had the greatest success upon the followers of Reason, over whom they scarcely ever failed to prevail, except when they counter-

acted one another. They had not the same triumphs over the votaries of Religion; for though they were often led aside for a time, Religion commonly recalled them by her emissary Conscience, before Habit had any time to enchain them. But they that professed to obey Reason, if once they forsook her, seldom returned; for she had no messenger to summon them but Pride, who generally betrayed her confidence, and employed all her skill to support Passion; and if ever she did her duty, was found unable to prevail, if Habit had interposed.

I soon found that the great danger to the followers of Religion was only from Habit; every other power was easily resisted; nor did they find any difficulty when they inadvertently quitted her, to find her again by the direction of Conscience, unless they had given time to Habit to draw her chain behind them, and bar up the way by which they had wandered. Of some of those the condition was justly to be pitied, who turned at every call of Conscience, and tried, but without effect, to burst the chains of Habit; saw Religion walking forward at a distance, saw her with reverence, and longed to join her; but were, whenever they approached her, withheld by Habit, and languished in sordid bondage, which they could not escape, though they scorned and hated it.

It was evident that the Habits were so far from growing weaker by these repeated contests, that if they were not totally overcome, every struggle enlarged their bulk and increased their strength; and a Habit opposed and victorious

was more than twice as strong as before the contest. The manner in which those who were weary of their tyranny endeavoured to escape from them, appeared by the event to be generally wrong; they tried to loose their chains one by one, and to retreat by the same degrees as they advanced; but before the deliverance was completed, Habit always threw new chains upon her fugitive; nor did any escape her but those who, by an effort sudden and violent, burst their shackles at once, and left her at a distance; and even of these many rushed too precipitately forward, and hindered by their terrors from stopping where they were safe, were fatigued with their own vehemence, and resigned themselves again to that power from whom an escape must be so dearly bought, and whose tyranny was little felt, except when it was resisted.

Some, however, there always were, who, when they found Habit prevailing over them, called upon Reason or Religion for assistance; each of them willingly came to the succour of her suppliant; but neither with the same strength, nor the same success. Habit, insolent with her power, would often presume to parley with Reason, and offer to loose some of her chains if the rest might remain. To this, Reason, who was never certain of victory, frequently consented; but always found her concession destructive, and saw the captive led away by Habit to his former slavery. Religion never submitted to treaty, but held out her hand with certainty of conquest; and if the captive to whom she gave it did not quit his hold, always led him away in triumph, and placed him

in the direct path to the Temple of Happiness, where Reason never failed to congratulate his deliverance, and encouraged his adherence to that power to whose timely succour he was indebted for it.

When the traveller was again placed in the road of Happiness, I saw Habit again gliding before him, but reduced to the stature of a dwarf, without strength and without activity; but when the Passions or Appetites, which had before seduced him, made their approach, Habit would on a sudden start into size, and with unexpected violence push him towards them. The wretch thus impelled on one side, and allured on the other, too frequently quitted the road of Happiness; to which, after his second deviation from it, he rarely returned: but if, by a timely call upon Religion, the force of Habit was eluded, her attacks grew fainter, and at last her correspondence with the enemy was entirely destroyed. She then began to employ those restless faculties in compliance with the power which she could not overcome; and as she grew again in stature and in strength, cleared away the asperities of the road to Happiness.

From this road I could not easily withdraw my attention, because all who travelled it appeared cheerful and satisfied; and the farther they proceeded, the greater appeared their alacrity, and the stronger their conviction of the wisdom of their guide. Some, who had never deviated but by short excursions, had Habit in the middle of their passage vigorously supporting them, and driving off their Appetites and Pas-

sions which attempted to interrupt their progress. Others, who had entered this road late, or had long forsaken it, were toiling on without her help, at least, and commonly against her endeavours. But I observed, when they approached to the barren top, that few were able to proceed without some support from Habit: and that those, whose habits were strong, advanced towards the mists with little emotion, and entered them at last with calmness and confidence; after which, they were seen only by the eye of Religion; and though Reason looked after them with the most earnest curiosity, she could only obtain a faint glimpse, when her mistress, to enlarge her prospect, raised her from the ground; Reason, however, discerned that they were safe, but Religion saw that they were happy.

“Now, Theodore,” said my protector, “withdraw thy view from the regions of obscurity, and see the fate of those who, when they were dismissed by Education, would admit no direction but that of Reason. Survey their wanderings, and be wise.”

I looked then upon the road of Reason, which was, indeed, so far as it reached, the same with that of Religion; nor had Reason discovered it by her instruction. Yet when she had once been taught it, she clearly saw that it was right; and Pride had sometimes incited her to declare that she discovered it herself, and persuaded her to offer herself as a guide to Religion; whom, after many vain experiments, she found it her highest privilege to follow. Reason was, however, at last well instructed in part of the way, and ap-

peared to teach it with some success, when her precepts were not misrepresented by Passion, or her influence overborne by Appetite. But neither of these enemies was she able to resist. When Passion seized upon her votaries, she seldom attempted opposition; she seemed indeed to contend with more vigour against Appetite, but was generally overwearied in the contest: and if either of her opponents had confederated with Habit, her authority was wholly at an end. When Habit endeavoured to captivate the votaries of Religion, she grew by slow degrees, and gave time to escape; but in seizing the unhappy followers of Reason, she proceeded as one that had nothing to fear, and enlarged her size, and doubled her chains without intermission, and without reserve.

Of those who forsook the directions of Reason, some were led aside by the whispers of Ambition, who was perpetually pointing to stately palaces, situated on eminences on either side, recounting the delights of affluence, and boasting the security of power. They were easily persuaded to follow her, and Habit quickly threw her chains upon them; they were soon convinced of the folly of their choice, but few of them attempted to return. Ambition led them forward from precipice to precipice, where many fell, and were seen no more. Those that escaped were, after a long series of hazards, generally delivered over to Avarice, and enlisted by her in the service of Tyranny, where they continued to heap up gold, till their patrons or their heirs pushed them headlong at last into the caverns of Despair.

Others were enticed by Intemperance to ramble

in search of those fruits that hung over the rocks; and filled the air with their fragrance. I observed that the Habits which hovered about these soon grew to an enormous size; nor were there any who less attempted to return to Reason, or sooner sunk into the gulfs that lay before them. When these first quitted the road, Reason looked after them with a frown of contempt, but had little expectations of being able to reclaim them; for the bowl of intoxication was of such qualities as to make them lose all regard but for the present moment: neither Hope nor Fear could enter their retreats; and Habit had so absolute a power, that even Conscience, if Religion had employed her in their favour, would not have been able to force an entrance.

There were others whose crime it was rather to neglect Reason than to disobey her; and who retreated from the heat and tumult of the way, not to the bowers of Intemperance, but to the maze of Indolence. They had this peculiarity in their condition, that they were always in sight of the road of Reason, always wishing for her presence, and always resolving to return to-morrow. In these was most eminently conspicuous the subtlety of Habit, who hung imperceptible shackles upon them, and was every moment leading them farther from the road, which they always imagined that they had the power of reaching. They wandered on from one double of the labyrinth to another, with the chains of Habit hanging secretly upon them, till, as they advanced, the flowers grew paler, and the scents fainter; they proceeded in their dreary march without pleasure in

their progress, yet without power to return; and had this aggravation above all others, that they were criminal but not delighted. The drunkard for a time laughed over his wine; the ambitious man triumphed in the miscarriage of his rival; but the captives of Indolence had neither superiority nor merriment. Discontent loured in their looks, and sadness hovered round their shades; yet they crawled on reluctant and gloomy, till they arrived at the depth of the recess, varied only with poppies and nightshade, where the dominion of Indolence terminates, and the hopeless wanderer is delivered up to Melancholy: the chains of Habit are riveted for ever; and Melancholy, having tortured her prisoner for a time, consigns him at last to the cruelty of Despair.

While I was musing on this miserable scene, my protector called out to me, "Remember, Theodore, and be wise; and let not Habit prevail against thee." I started, and beheld myself surrounded by the rocks of Teneriffe; the birds of light were singing in the trees, and the glances of the morning darted upon me. JOHNSON.

SUPERSTITION AND RELIGION.

I HAD lately a very remarkable dream, which made so strong an impression on me, that I remember it every word; and, if you are not better employed, you may read the relation of it, as follows:—

Methought I was in the midst of a very entertaining set of company, and extremely delighted

in attending to a lively conversation, when, on a sudden, I perceived one of the most shocking figures imagination can frame advancing towards me. She was dressed in black, her skin was contracted into a thousand wrinkles, her eyes deep sunk in her head, and her complexion pale and livid as the countenance of death. Her looks were filled with terror and unrelenting severity, and her hands armed with whips and scorpions. As soon as she came near, with a horrid frown and a voice that chilled my very blood, she bid me follow her. I obeyed; and she led me through rugged paths, beset with briars and thorns, into a deep solitary valley. Wherever she passed, the fading verdure withered beneath her steps; her pestilential breath infected the air with malignant vapours, obscured the lustre of the sun, and involved the fair face of heaven in universal gloom. Dismal howlings resounded through the forest, from every baleful tree the night raven uttered his dreadful note, and the prospect was filled with desolation and horror. In the midst of this tremendous scene my execrable guide addressed me in the following manner.

“Retire with me, O rash unthinking mortal, from the vain allurements of a deceitful world, and learn that pleasure was not designed the portion of human life. Man was born to mourn and to be wretched; this is the condition of all below the stars; and whoever endeavours to oppose it acts in contradiction to the will of Heaven. Fly then from the fatal enchantments of youth and social delight, and here consecrate the solitary hours to lamentation and woe. Misery

is the duty of all sublunary beings, and every enjoyment is an offence to the Deity, who is to be worshipped only by the mortification of every sense of pleasure and the everlasting exercise of sighs and tears."

This melancholy picture of life quite sunk my spirits, and seemed to annihilate every principle of joy within me. I threw myself beneath a blasted yew, where the winds blew cold and dismal round my head, and dreadful apprehensions chilled my heart. Here I resolved to lie, till the hand of death, which I impatiently invoked, should put an end to the miseries of a life so deplorably wretched. In this sad situation I espied on one hand of me a deep muddy river, whose heavy waters rolled on in slow sullen murmurs. Here I determined to plunge, and was just upon the brink when I found myself suddenly drawn back. I turned about, and was surprised by the sight of the loveliest object I had ever beheld. The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all her form; effulgent glories sparkled in her eyes, and their awful splendours were softened by the gentlest looks of compassion and peace. At her approach, the frightful spectre, who had before tormented me, vanished away, and with her all the horrors she had caused. The gloomy clouds brightened into cheerful sunshine, the groves recovered their verdure, and the whole region looked gay and blooming as the garden of Eden. I was quite transported at this unexpected change, and reviving pleasure began to glad my thoughts, when, with a look of inexpressible sweetness, my beau-

teous deliverer thus uttered her divine instructions.

“My name is Religion. I am the offspring of Truth and Love, and the parent of Benevolence, Hope, and Joy. That monster, from whose power I have freed you, is called Superstition; she is the child of Discontent, and her followers are Fear and Sorrow. Thus different as we are, she has often the insolence to assume my name and character, and seduces unhappy mortals to think us the same; till she, at length, drives them to the borders of despair, that dreadful abyss into which you were just going to sink.

“Look round and survey the various beauties of the globe, which Heaven has destined for the seat of the human race, and consider whether a world thus exquisitely framed could be meant for the abode of misery and pain. For what end has the lavish hand of Providence diffused such innumerable objects of delight, but that all might rejoice in the privilege of existence, and be filled with gratitude to the beneficent author of it? Thus to enjoy the blessings he has sent, is virtue and obedience; and to reject them, merely as means of pleasure, is pitiable ignorance or absurd perverseness. Infinite goodness is the source of created existence; the proper tendency of every rational being, from the highest order of raptured seraphs to the meanest rank of man, is to rise incessantly from lower degrees of happiness to higher. They have each faculties assigned them for various orders of delights.”

“What!” cried I, “is this the language of Religion? Does she lead her votaries through

flowery paths, and bid them pass an unlaborious life? Where are the painful toils of virtue, the mortifications of penitents, the self-denying exercises of saints and heroes?"

"The true enjoyments of a reasonable being," answered she mildly, "do not consist in unbounded indulgence or luxurious ease, in the tumults of passions, the languor of indolence, or the flutter of light amusements. Yielding to immoral pleasures corrupts the mind, living to animal or trifling ones debases it; both in their degree disqualify it for its genuine good, and consign it over to wretchedness. Whoever would be really happy must make the diligent and regular exercise of his superior powers his chief attention, adoring the perfections of his Maker, expressing good will to his fellow creatures, cultivating inward rectitude. To his lower faculties he must allow such gratifications as will, by refreshing him, invigorate his nobler pursuits. In the regions inhabited by angelic natures, unmingled felicity ever blooms; joy flows there with a perpetual and abundant stream, nor needs there any mound to check its course. Beings conscious of a frame of mind originally diseased, as all the human race has cause to be, must use the regimen of a stricter self-government. Whosoever has been guilty of voluntary excesses must patiently submit both to the painful workings of nature and needful severities of medicines in order to his cure. Still he is entitled to a moderate share of whatever alleviating accommodations this fair mansion of his merciful parent affords consistent with his recovery. And in proportion as this

recovery advances, the liveliest joy will spring from his secret sense of an amended and improving heart.—So far from the horrors of despair is the condition even of the guilty.—Shudder, poor mortal, at the thought of the gulf into which thou wast but now going to plunge.

“While the most faulty have every encouragement to amend, the more innocent soul will be supported with still sweeter consolations under all its experience of human infirmities; supported by the gladdening assurances that every sincere endeavour to outgrow them shall be assisted, accepted, and rewarded. To such a one the lowliest self abasement is but a deep laid foundation for the most elevated hopes; since they who faithfully examine and acknowledge what they are shall be enabled, under my conduct, to become what they desire. The Christian and the hero are inseparable; and to the aspirings of unassuming trust and filial confidence are set no bounds. To him who is animated with the view of obtaining approbation of the Sovereign of the universe, no difficulty is insurmountable. Secure in this pursuit of every needful aid, his conflict with the severest pains and trials is little more than the vigorous exercise of a mind in health. His patient dependance on that Providence which looks through all eternity, his silent resignation, his ready accommodation of his thoughts and behaviour to its inscrutable ways, is at once the most excellent sort of self-denial, and a source of the most exalted transports. Society is the true sphere of human virtue. In social, active life, difficulties will perpetually be met with; restraints of many kinds will be necessary; and

studying to behave right in respect of these, is a discipline of the human heart, useful to others, and improving to itself. Suffering is no duty, but where it is necessary to avoid guilt or to do good; nor pleasure a crime, but where it strengthens the influence of bad inclinations, or lessens the generous activity of virtue. The happiness allotted to man, in his present state, is indeed faint and low, compared with his immortal prospects and noble capacities; but yet, whatever portion of it the distributing hand of Heaven offers to each individual is a needful support and refreshment for the present moment, so far as it may not hinder the attaining of its final destination.

“Return then with me from continual misery to moderate enjoyment and grateful alacrity. Return from the contracted views of solitude to the proper duties of a relative and dependant being. Religion is not confined to cells and closets, nor restrained to sullen retirement. These are the gloomy doctrines of Superstition, by which she endeavours to break those chains of benevolence and social affection that link the welfare of every particular with that of the whole. Remember, that the greatest honour you can pay to the Author of your being is by such a cheerful behaviour as discovers a mind satisfied with his dispensations.”

Here my preceptress paused, and I was going to express my acknowledgments for her discourse, when a ring of bells from the neighbouring village and a new risen sun, darting his beams through my windows, awakened me.

MRS. CARTER.

KNOWLEDGE NOT NECESSARILY PRODUCTIVE OF HAPPINESS.

I BEGIN to have doubts whether wisdom be alone sufficient to make us happy. Whether every step we make in refinement is not an inlet into new disquietudes. A mind too vigorous and active serves only to consume the body to which it is joined, as the richest jewels are soonest found to wear their settings.

When we rise in knowledge, as the prospect widens, the objects of our regard become more obscure, and the unlettered peasant, whose views are only directed to the narrow sphere around him, beholds nature with a finer relish, and tastes her blessings with a keener appetite, than the philosopher whose mind attempts to grasp a universal system.

As I was some days ago pursuing this subject among a circle of my fellow slaves, an ancient Guebre of the number, equally remarkable for his piety and wisdom, seemed touched with my conversation, and desired to illustrate what I had been saying with an allegory taken from the Zendavesta of Zoroaster: "By this we shall be taught," says he, "that they who travel in pursuit of wisdom, walk only in a circle; and after all their labour, at last return to their pristine ignorance; and in this also we shall see that enthusiastic confidence or unsatisfying doubts terminate all our inquiries.

"In early times, before myriads of nations covered the earth, the whole human race lived

together in one valley. The simple inhabitants, surrounded on every side by lofty mountains, knew no other world but the little spot to which they were confined. They fancied the heavens bent down to meet the mountain tops, and formed an impenetrable wall to surround them. None had ever yet ventured to climb the steepy cliff, in order to explore those regions that lay beyond it; they knew the nature of the skies only from a tradition, which mentioned their being made of adamant; traditions make up the reasonings of the simple, and serve to silence every inquiry.

“ In this sequestered vale, blessed with all the spontaneous productions of nature, the honeyed blossom, the refreshing breeze, the gliding brook, and golden fruitage, the simple inhabitants seemed happy in themselves, in each other; they desired no greater pleasures, for they knew of none greater; ambition, pride, and envy were vices unknown among them; and from this peculiar simplicity of its possessors, the country was called *The Valley of Ignorance*.

“ At length, however, an unhappy youth, more aspiring than the rest, undertook to climb the mountain's side, and examine the summits which were hitherto deemed inaccessible. The inhabitants from below gazed with wonder at his intrepidity, some applauded his courage, others censured his folly; still, however, he proceeded towards the place where the earth and heavens seem to unite, and at length arrived at the wished-for height with extreme labour and assiduity.

“ His first surprise was to find the skies not, as he expected, within his reach, but still as far

off as before ; his amazement increased when he saw a wide extended region lying on the opposite side of the mountain, but it rose to astonishment when he beheld a country at a distance more beautiful and alluring than even that he had just left behind.

“ As he continued to gaze with wonder, a genius, with a look of infinite modesty, approaching, offered to be his guide and instructor. The distant country which you so much admire, says the angelic being, is called *The Land of Certainty* ; in that charming retreat, sentiment contributes to refine every sensual banquet : the inhabitants are blessed with every solid enjoyment, and still more blessed in a perfect consciousness of their own felicity ; ignorance in that country is wholly unknown, all there is satisfaction without alloy, for every pleasure first undergoes the examination of reason. As for me I am called the Genius of Demonstration, and am stationed here in order to conduct every adventurer to that land of happiness through those intervening regions you see overhung with fogs and darkness, and horrid with forests, cataracts, caverns, and various other shapes of danger. But follow me, and in time I may lead you to that distant desirable land of tranquillity.

“ The intrepid traveller immediately put himself under the direction of the genius, and both journeying on together with a slow but agreeable pace, deceived the tediousness of the way by conversation. The beginning of the journey seemed to promise true satisfaction ; but as they proceeded forward, the skies became more gloomy, and the

way more intricate ; they often inadvertently approached the brow of some frightful precipice, or the brink of a torrent, and were obliged to measure back their former way ; the gloom increasing as they proceeded, their pace became more slow ; they paused at every step, frequently stumbled, and their distrust and timidity increased. The Genius of Demonstration now therefore advised his pupil to grope upon hands and feet, as a method though more slow, yet less liable to error.

“ In this manner they attempted to pursue their journey for some time, when they were overtaken by another genius, who, with a precipitate pace, seemed travelling the same way. He was instantly known by the other to be *The Genius of Probability*. He wore two wide extended wings at his back, which incessantly waved, without increasing the rapidity of his motion ; his countenance betrayed a confidence that the ignorant might mistake for sincerity, and he had but one eye, which was fixed in the middle of his forehead.

“ ‘ Servant of Hormizda,’ cried he, approaching the mortal pilgrim, ‘ if thou art travelling to the *Land of Certainty*, how is it possible to arrive there under the guidance of a genius who proceeds forward so slowly, and is so little acquainted with the way ? Follow me, we shall soon perform the journey to where every pleasure awaits our arrival.’

“ The peremptory tone in which this genius spoke, and the speed with which he moved forward, induced the traveller to change his conductor, and, leaving his modest companion behind,

he proceeded forward with his more confident director, seeming not a little pleased at the increased velocity of his motion.

“But soon he found reasons to repent. Whenever a torrent crossed their way, his guide taught him to despise the obstacle by plunging him in; whenever a precipice presented, he was directed to fling himself forward. Thus each moment miraculously escaping, his repeated escapes only served to increase his temerity. He led him therefore forward, amidst infinite difficulties, till they arrived at the borders of an ocean, which appeared unnavigable from the black mists that lay upon its surface. Its unquiet waves were of the darkest hue, and gave a lively representation of the various agitations of the human mind.

“The Genius of Probability now confessed his temerity, owned his being an improper guide to *The Land of Certainty*, a country where no mortal had ever been permitted to arrive; but at the same time offered to supply the traveller with another conductor, who should carry him to the *Land of Confidence*, a region where the inhabitants lived with the utmost tranquillity, and tasted almost as much satisfaction as if in the Land of Certainty. Not waiting for a reply, he stamped three times on the ground, and called forth *The Demon of Error*, a gloomy fiend of the servants of Arimanes. The yawning earth gave up the reluctant savage, who seemed unable to bear the light of the day. His stature was enormous, his colour black and hideous, his aspect betrayed a thousand varying passions, and he spread forth pinions that were fitted for the most rapid flight.

The traveller at first was shocked at the spectre ; but finding him obedient to superior power, he assumed his former tranquillity.

“ ‘ I have called you to duty,’ cries the genius to the demon, ‘ to bear on your back a son of mortality over *The Ocean of Doubts* into *The Land of Confidence*: I expect you’ll perform your commission with punctuality. And as for you,’ continued the genius, addressing the traveller, ‘ when once I have bound this fillet round your eyes, let no voice of persuasion, nor threat the most terrifying, persuade you to unbind it in order to look round ; keep the fillet fast, look not at the ocean below, and you may certainly expect to arrive at a region of pleasure.’

“ Thus saying, and the traveller’s eyes being covered, the demon, muttering curses, raised him on his back, and instantly, upborne by his strong pinions, directed his flight among the clouds. Neither the loudest thunder, nor the most angry tempest, could persuade the traveller to unbind his eyes. The demon directed his flight downwards, and skimmed the surface of the ocean ; a thousand voices, some with loud invectives, others in the sarcastic tones of contempt, vainly endeavoured to persuade him to look round ; but he still continued to keep his eyes covered, and would in all probability have arrived at the happy land, had not flattery effected what other means could not perform. For now he heard himself welcomed on every side to the promised land, and a universal shout of joy was sent forth at his safe arrival ; the wearied traveller, desirous of seeing the long wished for country, at length

pulled the fillet from his eyes, and ventured to look round him. But he had unloosed the band too soon; he was not yet above half way over. The demon, who was still hovering in the air, and had produced those sounds only in order to deceive, was now freed from his commission; wherefore throwing the astonished traveller from his back, the unhappy youth fell headlong into the subjacent Ocean of Doubts, from whence he never after was seen to rise." GOLDSMITH.

A MOTHER'S FUNERAL.

My dear mother died when I was four years old. I remember that she held out her hand to me just before she kissed me for the last time; and it was so very thin and white; her eyes too looked larger than they ever seemed, and of a deeper blue: she turned round to my father that night, and said, "Let Charles sit up a little longer this evening, my love." My father only looked at her; I wondered he did not answer; but I believe it was because he could not speak just then, for I saw him crying behind the bed curtains soon after. When I woke the next morning, they told me mama was dead. I did not pay much attention to what they said, for I did not know what it meant to be dead; I did not think the morning seemed at all gloomy; for the sun was shining as brightly as ever, and when I went out into our field, the larks were singing as cheerfully as ever, nothing seemed dull. I was sitting under a large hawthorn tree, at the end of

our field, and watching a goldfinch which was dancing among the slender branches; while, every now and then, a little shower of white blossoms came flying down to the ground. I was always very fond of peeping up, from under a tree, and observing how many little shady arbours were formed among the boughs; and how transparently green and bright the leaves appeared, when seen from quite beneath. The merry goldfinch had just flown away, when Elizabeth came out; and I began to think about my mother again: "What does 'dead' mean, Elizabeth?" I asked; "for Jenny says mama is dead." My sister only began to weep; but at last she said, "Dead, means," she looked round and hesitated; but she saw the hawthorn blossoms on the grass, and said, "these flowers are dead, Charles; those on the tree, which have that beautiful pink colour, blushing over them, are the most fresh; those, which look dark in the centre, are dying: after a few days, these, which are now white on the ground, will have wasted away, and will not be seen any more: some of the blossoms are shaken by very rough winds; and your mama died as they do."—Here Elizabeth wept again: "but all these," she added, "after hanging on the tree some time, must fall off and die; as persons who are as old as grandpapa *must* die." Elizabeth told me a great deal more, and explained why mama was different from the hawthorn blossoms; because she had a soul, which always lives; and she told me, that if I obeyed God, I might see my mother again (after I was dead) in heaven. I was very happy to hear that;

because I had begun to fear that she would never be seen again, like the dead flowers. I supposed then that my eldest sister, Magdalen, was dead ; for I had never seen her since she had left her home, to stay with her aunt in Devonshire ; and no one had talked about her for many months. I just remember that she was very good natured, and much prettier than Elizabeth ; she had bright gold coloured hair, which hung down nearly to her little waist, in such large shining curls. She was a very merry girl, and always made my father and mother laugh when she was with them.

I wished I could see my mother, but I hardly knew whether she had not wasted away into nothing, as I saw the fallen hawthorn blossoms had. A few days after, I was so surprised to see a large long box carried down stairs one morning, covered with black cloth. I went up to the men, and asked what they were carrying, which seemed so heavy ? One of them, a silly looking lad, answered, " Your mother's coffin, little master." I ran down stairs to tell my father, and asked what that silly looking lad meant ; but he was not in his study. I went to the window, and looking out, I saw the men carrying something : I guessed it must be the same box, only it was hidden by a long black sheet, edged with white ; my father and Elizabeth were walking after them very slowly. I ran out without my hat, and asked my father to take me with them. I did not overtake him till he reached the churchyard. An old woman came, and said, " You had better come home

with me again, Master Charles ;” but I hid myself within the long cloak which my father wore ; and, taking hold of his hand, said, “ No, no, mayn’t I stay with you, father ?” He had not noticed me before, but now he pressed my hand more closely within his, and said to the poor woman, very mildly : “ I will keep him with me.” We entered the church, and I trembled all over ; every one looked so grave, and a loud mournful bell tolled just over my head, which I had not heard before.

My father was very attentive to the service ; but I saw that he always looked at the coffin, and moved his head quickly whenever it was moved. I could not think what the great pit was made for in the churchyard. I had guessed, from what I heard the clergyman say, that my mother’s body was in the coffin ; but I did not guess they were going to bury the coffin in the ground, because the hawthorn blossoms were not buried, and the grass in the churchyard was just as green as that in the field. My father stood at one end of the grave, with his head uncovered ; he never once moved his eyes, but his face was very pale, and his lips shook. I was frightened, and only just peeped my head out of his long cloak. Elizabeth stood very near him, but a thick veil hung down over her face, and through it I saw she held her handkerchief before her eyes. When the coffin sounded at the bottom of the grave, my father started and shivered, just as if he had been cold ; it was odd, I thought then, for the weather was mild and warm ; I did not know that he shivered from grief ; soon after this my

father walked away ; I wondered why he should go, and leave my mother's body in the deep dark hole ; I had half a mind to stay, but my poor father looked so mournful that I slowly accompanied him home.—I had cried a little once or twice, but I had never missed my mother so much till when I passed her room door, as I went up stairs to bed ; I ran up faster than Jenny, and I could not help going in ; it was almost dark, the cold air came in through the open windows ; the carpets were all taken up, and the room looked very desolate. My mother's favourite little work table was pushed up in a corner, and on it lay a turnscrew and some screws : in the middle of the room were two odd looking stands, like those which they put the coffin on in the church, and some sawdust was thinly strewn on the floor. I was standing in this room, almost ready to cry, and thinking of my dear, dear mother, and that I should perhaps grow up to be a man, and never see her again till I died. I had never felt so very, very miserable as I then did ; I have never felt so miserable since. It grew darker and darker, still I was standing in the middle of the room. I began by degrees to be afraid of moving ; and I put both my hands before my eyes, that I might not see any thing, for every thing looked so melancholy. All at once I heard something pass rustling by my head ; and then I heard it flutter against the window. I did not consider one moment ; but I burst out into a loud fit of crying. Jenny heard me, she had been looking about, for she could not think where I had gone. When she came in I ran to her, and began to

make more noise : I would not tell her why I cried out, nor would I go away with her ; but I seemed as if her presence only gave me the liberty of crying more violently. I would not be pacified, when Elizabeth came into the room. She spoke to me : I turned round, taking away Jenny's apron, behind which I had hidden my face. I minded all Elizabeth told me directly, for she spoke just like my mother. " Act like a manly boy, my dear Charles," she said ; " and tell me calmly why you are so frightened." " Oh ! there it is, there it is," I cried loudly, for, during the time my sister had spoken so quietly, I heard the loud fluttering again. Elizabeth guessed instantly what had frightened me ; she went up to the window, and, coming again to me, took my hand, to lead me to the window. " Oh ! no, no," I cried out, but at last I let her draw me forward. I kept my eyes covered at first by my hands, but at last I opened them, finger by finger, and saw a large moth, beating its wings against the window, and seeming quite as terrified as I had been. Elizabeth sat by my bedside that night (she always heard me say my prayers after my mother died), and talked to me till I fell asleep. When I woke the next morning, I went up to the window ; the first thing I saw was the church ; I remembered that my mother's body had been lying out all night, and ran as fast as I could to the churchyard. The dark pit was not to be seen, nor could I find where it had been for some time. On the spot was a sort of mound raised up, like many others in the churchyard, covered with fresh turf, and bound together with

osiers. One little cowslip was growing up among the grass; the soft pale green stem of this flower was no longer than a long blade of grass; but I was quite glad to see it, and every morning I went to look if the buds were blown, and when the weather was very dry I always watered it. After it left off blowing I never forgot it; but loved its little crumpled half-hidden leaves better than all the brightest summer flowers: now there are more than thirty cowslips on my mother's grave. A cowslip was her favourite flower.

ANONYMOUS.

ON OUR PASSAGE THROUGH LIFE.

A REVERIE.

I do not much love the tribe of dreaming writers. There is something very unnatural in supposing such products of understanding, such a regular series of ideas, generally abstruse and allegorical enough to put the comprehension of a waking reader upon the stretch, to be the effects of wild imagination, at those hours when she is most unassisted by reason and memory. Yet it is pity a lively fancy should be balked, and confined to the dull road of essay writing, merely to avoid such a trifling absurdity in the phrase. It might certainly be changed, with great propriety, into that of a reverie, which, by people that indulge their imaginations, is often carried on a very considerable time, with as gay a variety of circumstances and as lively colouring as the poppy-dipped pencil of Morpheus could ever produce.

Be it allowed me then to say, that one afternoon this summer I fell into a deep reverie, lulled by the whispering of groves, the soft descent of a refreshing shower, and the musical repetitions of a thrush ; the air around me was perfumed with jessamines and woodbines ; and I found myself perfectly in a poetical situation. The volume I had in my hand should of right, to be sure, have been Ovid or Petrarch ; but it was Sunday, and the genteel reader must excuse me if I own that it contained the book of Ecclesiastes.

The soothing scene about me had at length suspended my reading ; but my thoughts were still filled with many beautiful images of the nothingness and vanity of human life. There is something so bounded and so shadowy in our existence that the celestial beam of understanding, which shows us what it is, must give us almost a disgust of life itself, were not our affections attached to it by so many tender ties, as call back our proud thoughts every moment. "Most miserable state!" continued I, in a melancholy soliloquy, "what wretchedness are we conversant in, to what mean objects are we bound down, how little a way can we see round us, how much less can we comprehend through what a wild of errors lies the narrow path of truth ! Narrow and long ! Long ? Why then it is not, methinks, so strange that one should not step to the end of it at once. Well, suffice it that our progress be gradual, but what a thick dark hedge is here on either side ! How much pleasanter would it be to break through it, and view the fair varieties of the universe as we pass along ! Suppose it quite

away. In the midst of this vast trackless plain how will you now distinguish your path? This brink of a precipice that you are to pass along, does not your head turn at it? Do not you wish again for your safe boundary? Well, but here the path is safe and open: amuse yourself, look around you. I do not like my own path. Yonder is one much fairer, passing over a much nobler eminence. I like my own path less than ever. I do not yet see far enough. O thou spirit of disorder and confusion, canst thou not be contented to move in the way allotted thee? Deviate then into ruin. Many a winding walk presents itself on each hand; art thou willing to venture?—No, let us pursue this safer vulgar path. Must we have dirt and cloudy weather too?—You must: it belongs to this portion of the universe. This rain that displeases you here, is nourishing sweet herbs and delicious fruits, that will refresh you a few furlongs hence. Behold now the advantage of these despicable things you are hedged in with; these thorns that sometimes pull you back, are often crowned with gay and fragrant blossoms, to make the tedious journey seem less irksome; those thick trees, that bar your wandering view, are dressed in a soft verdure that relieves your eye, and enables it sometimes to take a better glimpse through the branches on objects that it could not dwell upon till it becomes stronger. Beneath a cypress lay a gloomy philosopher, who called out in a dismal tone, “Whoever you are, foolish passenger, know your own misery: it is impossible to have any rational enjoyment in this your despicable state: banish the thought of

comfort. You are a parcel of wretches : to be happy is none of your business ; to be cheerful is an absurdity. These blossoms are transient as the spring ; those vile fruits you gather as you pass along ought not to detain your attention one moment from those gems that glitter on your heads, which are your only real treasure. Those wretched fruits what are they ? ” “ They are what support us from one state to another,” said a plain man, who passed by ; “ and our stock of gems is gradually decreasing if we keep but steadily in the right path, and gently and patiently remove the thorns and briers that molest us as we move towards the country of diamonds.” Immediately my reverie transported me into a fair. Long streets of booths, crossing each other at right angles, formed very regular squares, of which some were handsome, and some very ugly, from the different structures of the booths. Several market-women were carrying away bundles and baskets marked with the names of the various proprietors. I met a hag of a very untoward look, bent almost double with the weight of years, her brow wrinkled, and her complexion weather beaten. The sight of her displeased me, but she was not to be avoided. “ Here,” said she, offering me a filthy basket, covered at the top with thorns, “ take your purchase, and make much of it.” “ My purchase,” said I, stepping back. “ Nay,” said she, “ even take it,” and flung it at my head. But as she turned away, a smile, that began to brighten on her solemn face, discovered to me that she was the good fairy Experience. I sat down with the encouragement

this discovery gave me, and began to examine her basket. The thorns it was covered with cost me a good deal of time to disentangle, and take them out with safety to my fingers, but I recollected them distinctly every one to be such as had perplexed me and torn my clothes as I passed along the narrow path, and which one by one I had gently broken off the boughs while I pursued my journey. These were the very individual thorns and briers ; and, while I was wondering how they should come to be so collected, I came to the bottom, where I found a row of inestimable pearls, equal in number to the briers, large, even, round, and of exquisite polish. Beside them lay a scrap of paper, with these words written on it :—

“Philosophy and evenness of temper are pearls, which we purchase at the price of those vexations and crosses in life that occur to us every day. Nothing in this world is to be had for nothing. Every difficulty we surmount is the purchase of some advantage. Go through the fair and see.”

I perceived a good genius standing near me, and desired him to be my cicerone. We went through the booths, and examined the purchases. Here the coin paid down for health and ease, and freedom from perplexity, was stamped with care and prudence : the copper money of mere plodding perseverance was the price of wealth, honour, learning, and accomplishments. In one place there was a sort of Monmouth Street, where people were bartering old bad habits for new ones, every way more becoming, but seemed to think their bargains very hard ; and the very

article of fitting them on occasioned such a variety of wry faces as would have given great diversion to a grotesque painter. It was a melancholy amusement to see how people mistook in the value they set upon things, how often they passed by, with a slighting air, those goods which at first they might have had for a trifle; and never knew the worth of them till they were engaged to other bidders, or the price was raised very high, or themselves, perhaps, gone so far off before they took the fancy of returning, that they could not find their way back without a guide; and in the whole place there was but one guide to be met with, and she of so forbidding an aspect, and so disagreeable a conversation, as made her a very undesirable companion. She severely reproved their folly, and obliged them to throw away the bargains on which they had most set their heart, and then led them back to the fair, by a rough roundabout way, to buy those they had formerly slighted; by the time they had got there she began to wear a gentle aspect, and they found so much advantage in the change of their purchases, that, notwithstanding all her rude treatment, they acknowledged Repentance as a very useful friend.

Leisure, I found, was a metal, that proved more or less valuable according to the image stamped upon it, and, as I saw what admirable curiosities it purchased in the hands of good managers, I was quite provoked to see what quantities of it were flung away: but this was nothing. I saw many fine people throw away handfuls of diamonds, that they might have their fingers at liberty to catch butterflies.

In some parts of the fair every body seemed to be playing at cross purposes : the most valuable gems were squandered away for trifles; which yet they could not purchase, and trifles offered for jewels of the highest price. I saw my friend Fosco, the antiquarian, among a multitude of the same class, who brought such a quantity of time and industry as would have purchased any thing in the whole place, and poured it out before a cabinet of copper coins, which still, after all, wanted one or two of being perfect. I saw others of gayer appearance buy a shadow, a flower, a feather, at still a higher price. At last, to my infinite vexation, a less shadowy figure stood before me, and a summons to attend some visitors that were just alighted put an end to my reverie.

MISS TALBOT.

THE

PROPER EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

I WAS yesterday pursuing the hint which I mentioned in my last paper, and comparing together the industry of man with that of other creatures ; in which I could not but observe, that notwithstanding we are obliged by duty to keep ourselves in constant employ, after the same manner as inferior animals are prompted to it by instinct, we fall very short of them in this particular. We are here the more inexcusable, because there is a greater variety of business to which we may apply ourselves. Reason opens to us a large field of affairs, which other creatures are not capable of. Beasts of prey, and I believe all

other kinds, in their natural state of being, divide their time between action and rest. They are always at work or asleep. In short, their waking hours are wholly taken up in seeking after their food or in consuming it. The human species only, to the great reproach of our natures, are filled with complaints that "the day hangs heavy on them," that "they do not know what to do with themselves," that "they are at a loss how to pass away their time," with many of the like shameful murmurs, which we often find in the mouths of those who are styled "reasonable beings." How monstrous are such expressions among creatures who have the labours of the mind, as well as those of the body, to furnish them with proper employments; who, besides the business of their proper callings and professions, can apply themselves to the duties of religion, to meditation, to the reading of useful books, to discourse; in a word, who may exercise themselves in the unbounded pursuits of knowledge and virtue, and every hour of their lives make themselves wiser or better than they were before!

After having been taken up for some time in this course of thought, I diverted myself with a book, according to my usual custom, in order to unbend my mind before I went to sleep. The book I made use of on this occasion was Lucian, where I amused my thoughts for about an hour among the dialogues of the dead, which in all probability produced the following dream.

I was conveyed, methought, into the entrance of the infernal regions, where I saw Rhadaman-

thus, one of the judges of the dead, seated in his tribunal. On his left hand stood the keeper of Erebus, on the right the keeper of Elysium. I was told he sat upon women that day, there being several of the sex lately arrived, who had not yet their mansions assigned them. I was surprised to hear him ask every one of them the same question, namely, "What they had been doing?" Upon this question being proposed to the whole assembly, they stared one upon another, as not knowing what to answer. He then interrogated each of them separately. "Madam," says he to the first of them, "you have been upon the earth above fifty years; what have you been doing there all this while?" "Doing!" says she, "really I do not know what I have been doing: I desire I may have time given me to recollect." After about half an hour's pause, she told him she had been playing at crimp; upon which Rhadamanthus beckoned to the keeper on his left hand, to take her into custody. "And you, madam," says the judge, "that look with such a soft and languishing air, I think you set out for this place in your nine and twentieth year, and what have you been doing all this while?" "I had a great deal of business on my hands," says she, "being taken up the first twelve years of my life in dressing a jointed baby, and all the remaining part of it in reading plays and romances." "Very well," says he, "you have employed your time to good purpose. Away with her!" The next was a plain country woman. "Well, mistress," says Rhadamanthus, "and what have you been doing?" "An't

please your worship," says she, "I did not live quite forty years; and in that time brought my husband seven daughters, and made him nine thousand cheeses, and left my eldest girl with him, to look after his house in my absence, and who, I may venture to say, is as pretty a housewife as any in the country." Rhadamanthus smiled at the simplicity of the good woman, and ordered the keeper of Elysium to take her into his care. "And you, fair lady," says he, "what have you been doing these five and thirty years?" "I have been doing no hurt, I assure you, sir," says she. "That is well," said he; "but what good have you been doing?" The lady was in great confusion at this question, and not knowing what to answer, the two keepers leaped out to seize her at the same time; the one took her by the hand to convey her to Elysium, the other caught hold of her to carry her away to Erebus. But Rhadamanthus observing an ingenuous modesty in her countenance and behaviour, bid them both to let her loose, and set her aside for a reexamination when he was more at leisure. An old woman, of a proud and sour look, presented herself at the bar, and being asked what she had been doing? "Truly," says she, "I have lived three score and ten years in a very wicked world, and was so angry at the behaviour of a parcel of young flirts, that I passed most of my last years in condemning the follies of the times; I was every day blaming the silly conduct of people about me, in order to deter those I conversed with from falling into the like errors and miscarriages." "Very well," says Rhadaman-

thus, "but did you keep the same watchful eye over your own actions?" "Why, truly," says she, "I was so taken up with publishing the faults of others, that I had no time to consider my own." "Madam," says Rhadamanthus, "be pleased to file off to the left, and make room for the venerable matron that stands behind you." "Old gentlewoman," says he, "I think you are fourscore. You have heard the question, what have you been doing so long in the world?" "Oh, sir," says she, "I have been doing what I should not have done, but I had made a firm resolution to have changed my life, if I had not been snatched off by an untimely end." "Madam," says he, "you will please to follow your leader:" and spying another of the same age, interrogated her in the same form. To which the matron replied, "I have been the wife of a husband who was as dear to me in his old age as in his youth. I have been a mother, and very happy in my children, whom I endeavoured to bring up in every thing that is good. My eldest son is blessed by the poor, and beloved by every one that knows him. I lived within my own family, and left it more wealthy than I found it." Rhadamanthus, who knew the value of the old lady, smiled upon her, in such a manner, that the keeper of Elysium, who knew his office, reached out his hand to her. He no sooner touched her but the wrinkles vanished, her eyes sparkled, her cheeks glowed with blushes, and she appeared in full bloom and beauty. A young woman observing that this officer, who conducted the happy to Elysium, was so great a beautifier,

longed to be in his hands ; so that, pressing through the crowd, she was the next that appeared at the bar ; and being asked what she had been doing the five and twenty years that she had passed in the world, " I have endeavoured," says she, " ever since I came to years of discretion, to make myself lovely, and gain admirers. In order to do it I passed my time in bottling up May dew, inventing white washes, mixing colours, cutting out patches, consulting my glass, suiting my complexion, tearing off my tucker, sinking my stays —." Rhadamanthus, without hearing her out, gave the sign to take her off. Upon the approach of the keeper of Erebus, her colour faded, her face was puckered up with wrinkles, and her whole person lost in deformity.

I was then surprised with a distant sound of a whole troop of females that came forward, laughing, singing, and dancing. I was very desirous to know the reception they would meet with, and withal was very apprehensive that Rhadamanthus would spoil their mirth : but at their nearer approach the noise grew so very great that it awakened me.

I lay some time, reflecting in myself on the oddness of this dream, and could not forbear asking my own heart what I was doing ? I answered myself that I was writing *Guardians*. If my readers make as good a use of this work as I design they should, I hope it will never be imputed to me as a work that is vain and unprofitable.

I shall conclude this paper with recommending

to them the same short self examination. If every one of them frequently lays his hand upon his heart, and considers what he is doing, it will check him in all the idle, or what is worse, the vicious moments of life, lift up his mind when it is running on in a series of indifferent actions, and encourage him when he is engaged in those which are virtuous and laudable. In a word, it will very much alleviate that guilt which the best of men have reason to acknowledge in their daily confessions of "leaving undone those things which they ought to have done, and of doing those things which they ought not to have done."

ADDISON.

THE LAW OF AMASIS.

HERODOTUS tells us, that Amasis, king of Egypt, established a law commanding that every Egyptian should annually declare, before the governor of the province, by what means he maintained himself; which if he omitted to do, or if, on such examination, he gave not a satisfactory account of his way of living, he should be punished with death.

Happening to meet with this passage one night lately, it suggested some ideas as to the wisdom of such an institution, and I amused myself for half an hour before I went to bed with reflecting on the effects it might have, if introduced into this island. These thoughts recurred in my sleep, and produced a dream of which I shall endeavour to give some account, after pre-

missing that, when I awakened in the morning it was some time before I could with certainty determine whether my imagination had transported me to Egypt, or if the objects it had presented to my view in my sleep were the consequences of the promulgation of a similar law in our country.

Upon the appointed day I fancied that I accompanied the whole inhabitants of the province to the palace of the governor. On our arrival we were shown into a hall of vast extent, at one end of which, on something like a throne, sat the governor, surrounded by clerks, whose business it was to take down the account which every person in his turn should give. Silence being proclaimed, we were directed to approach the throne one by one, in a certain order, to give an account of our way of living, and to say by what means each of us maintained himself. This summons appeared the more awful, as the law of Amasis, like many other good institutions, had been allowed to go into disuse, and, after being neglected for ages, was now revived on account of some recent enormities, which called forth the attention of government. I fancied too that the law was so far altered, that instead of death in all cases, the governor was authorized to inflict such punishment upon the delinquents as their offences should seem to merit.

The first whose lot it was to answer the awful question was a handsome young man, clothed in a garment of bright scarlet, embroidered with gold. He approached the throne with an assured countenance, and, with a look of self-approbation,

informed the governor, that he lived by the most honourable of all professions ; that his sole business was to kill and destroy his own species, to butcher men who had never injured him, whom perhaps he had never seen before, or for whom he entertained the highest esteem and regard. For doing this, said he, my country gives me a daily allowance, on which I live with ease and comfort.

At this account I observed a momentary blush to cross the face of the governor. He dismissed the young man with a look in which I could discern marks of dissatisfaction, not with the individual before his eyes, but with those absurd and unjust measures of government which were supposed to make such institutions necessary.

The officer was succeeded by a young man still more gaily dressed. As he approached the throne, I could perceive in his countenance marks of anxiety and apprehension, which he seemed desirous to conceal by an appearance of ease and indifference. When the usual questions were put to him, he hesitated for some time ; but at length was obliged to declare that he was the son of an honest and industrious tradesman ; that despising the occupation of his father, he left his house and removed to Memphis, where, by the splendour of his appearance, he contrived to get into the society of persons of high distinction ; and that he supported the expense of this mode of life by playing with those persons for large sums of money at games, in which, by some labour and constant attention, he had attained a superior degree of excellence. The governor having heard

him to an end, sentenced the unfortunate youth to be sent back to the house of his father, to assist him in his labour. The father, who was present in the hall, at the same time received orders to keep his son in close confinement, till he had acquired a habit of application, and a sufficient degree of skill in the business to which he was now to apply himself.

He was followed by a person not unlike him in manner and appearance, though somewhat more advanced in years. The account this person gave of himself was nearly in these words : " I was born to an independent fortune, to which I succeeded at the age of eighteen by the death of my father. From that moment my sole object was the enjoyment of my fortune, of which I thought I should never be able to see an end. I joined in every party of pleasure, and indulged in every species of expensive dissipation. At the end of seven years I found my fortune gone, and the only comfort that remained for me was, that I had spent it in a manner suitable to my rank, and in the society of the first and noblest persons in Egypt. Happily for me, those great persons conceived that it would be unbecoming to expose one who had passed so many hours in their company to poverty and want ; at the same time they justly considered that it might degrade a person who could boast of once having been their equal and companion to subsist on the bounty of private individuals. They therefore humbly besought our mighty sovereign to bestow upon me an office at once honourable and lucrative. To this request he was pleased to lend a

favourable ear. The emoluments of my office are considerable; but I am obliged to give a portion of them to a creature who performs the duties of it, and upon the remainder I can still afford to live in luxury not much inferior to that of my former affluence." Upon hearing this account, the governor inquired into the character of the deputy, and finding he was a worthy and respectable citizen, who had long done the business of a laborious and important office for the small pittance allowed him by the gentleman before him, he pronounced a sentence which to me appeared highly equitable. He ordered that the deputy should in future draw the whole emoluments, paying only to the principal the same allowance which formerly the deputy had received.

The next person who approached the throne addressed the governor with an unembarrassed and steady countenance in the following words: "By some fortunate circumstances," said he, "I was early in life introduced into the society of many persons of the first distinction. At their tables I acquired a taste for good living, which I came to consider as the first of all enjoyments; but possessing no fortune, this passion might have proved a curse instead of a blessing, had I not happily discovered a method of gratifying it, at once easy and agreeable. By my intercourse with the great, I soon discovered that it was in my power to give, in return for the dainties of their table, something which to them was more precious, while it cost me nothing. At the board of Sethos I harangue in praise of learning and

learned men, well knowing that, amidst all his opulence and splendour, the chief ambition of Sethos is to be considered as a man of letters. At the elegant repasts of Osoroth, I join him in declaiming against the luxury of modern times, while each of his company, with equal solicitude, looks around for some new delicacy to provoke a satiated appetite. At the house of the rich Susennes, whose vanity lies in the splendour of his entertainments, and in the excellence of his table, I openly praise every dish that is served up, and tell Susennes that his wine of Persia is the finest in the world, and that his gardens produce fruits of unrivalled excellence. In this vocation or calling of mine, as it may be termed, there is one circumstance which, it must be confessed, is sometimes a little unpleasant. When at the table of one great friend I happen to deliver sentiments and opinions diametrically opposite to those I had supported the day before at another place, a pert visitor may be so rude as to remark this sudden change, or by a broad grin to show that it has not passed unobserved. But nevertheless," continued he, "I contrive to live happily, and to enjoy all the advantages of a great fortune, without the trouble and embarrassment of it." "Live then," said the governor, with a look of ineffable contempt, "if you can submit to live on such terms."

Upon the removal of this gentleman, appeared a tall, thin, meagre figure, which stalked up with wonderful dignity to the presence of the governor, and thus addressed him: "I am the representative of the noblest and most ancient family in

Egypt. My forefathers were the companions of the victories of Sesostris and Semiramis. It is true, that, owing to the princely generosity of my great ancestors, I am at present obliged to honour some wealthy inhabitants of this province, so far as to receive from them the means of subsistence. Emboldened, perhaps, by this circumstance, one of these persons lately presumed to ask my daughter in marriage, telling me that their hearts had long been united by every tie of the most tender affection. But I drove the vile plebeian from my presence : and had I not been prevented, would have sacrificed him to my just indignation."

At the close of this narrative, the governor hesitated for a moment, and then ordered the guards to conduct this noble personage to the hospital set apart for the reception of lunatics.

A gentleman, whose train and whose appearance bespoke his consequence, now approached the throne, with a look and manner polished and at the same time assured. " I presume," said he to the governor, " you are not unacquainted with the name of Zoroës. In that council which the wisdom of our sovereign has established for the government of his Ethiopian dominions I hold a distinguished place ; a situation which I owe to my own talents, having neither the influence of hereditary wealth, nor the pride of illustrious ancestry to support me. But in the college of the priests at Memphis I was early taught qualities by which to compensate the want of those advantages ; penetration to discover the weaknesses, and pliancy to conciliate the affec-

tions of men. In that seminary, likewise, I acquired a power of eloquence to lead the passions, a subtlety of argument to confound the judgment. Endowed with such accomplishments, I obtained a seat in that council, which by the superiority of my talents I have since been enabled to guide. Amidst the divisions with which that council has been agitated, amidst the factions with which our province has been torn, the art of Zoroës has drawn from those divisions and those factions his power, his emoluments: he has wielded to his purposes the furious zeal of the multitude, and the jarring interests of their leaders; and has risen, by his command over the fluctuating opinions of mankind, to rank, to office, and to wealth." The governor looked sternly at him, and his face reddened with indignation: "I am not, indeed," said he, "a stranger to the name of Zoroës; I have heard of such a man, who lives on the mischiefs of faction, who foment divisions that he may increase his own consequence, and creates parties that he may guide them in the blindness of their course; who sows public contention that he may reap private advantage, and thrives amidst the storms that wreck the peace of his country." He gave the signal to the guards, who hurried Zoroës to his fate. His punishment was cruel, but somewhat analogous to his character and his crimes. He was exposed in an island of the Nile to the crocodiles that inhabit it.

After witnessing this disagreeable exercise of justice, it was with pleasure I beheld a beautiful female, dressed with equal elegance and splen-

dour, tripping towards the throne, and seemingly pleased with the admiration of the surrounding multitude. In a sweet accent, though with a manner rather infantine, she informed the governor that some months ago she had married a man of fourscore, who had nothing to recommend him but his immense wealth, of which she had previously stipulated that she should have the absolute disposal. "You see," said she, "the use I make of it. These jewels are esteemed the finest in the province; and I hope soon to possess a set still more precious." The governor, without hearing more of her prattle, pronounced a sentence which I confess I thought somewhat severe. He ordered her to be stripped of all her costly ornaments, and to be sent home in a plain garment to the house of her husband, with instructions that, during the remainder of his days, she should be constrained to live constantly with him, and permitted to see no other company whatever.

While I was commiserating the hard fate of the fair unfortunate, the crier pronounced my own name, in a deep and hollow tone of voice. This alarmed me so much, that I awakened in no small consternation, and was very well pleased to find myself quietly in my own bed in the town of Edinburgh. Of all men living a loungeur must ever be the most puzzled to give an account of his life, conversation, and mode of living; and therefore, however wise the law of Amasis may be, I fairly own that I was happy to find I was not subject to it.

ABERCROMBY.

THE ADVENTURE OF OBIDAH.

OBIDAH, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the valleys, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of Paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way, bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence without suffering its fatigues. He therefore still continued to walk,

for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the music of the birds, whom the heat had assembled in the shades; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers, that covered the banks on either sides, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains, and murmuring with waterfalls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward

lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was over-spread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and solitude surrounded him! the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills—

—Χαίμαρ' οἱ ποταμοὶ κατ' ὃ ροεῖς ῥέοντες
 Ἐς μωγαγεῖσαν διπλόλλαν ἰερίαν ὕδαρ,
 Τὸνδε τε τῆλός τε δὴ πονεῖν ἐκλυσ ποταμῶν.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry showers,
 Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;
 The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered

through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled; and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over—"Tell me," said the hermit, "by what chance thou hast been brought hither? I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before." Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

"Son," said the hermit, "let the errors and follies, the dangers and escape, of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with

crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we for a while keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made: that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errors: and that he

who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose; commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence; and, when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life.”

JOHNSON.

PRIDE NOT MADE FOR MAN.

THERE is no passion which steals into the heart more imperceptibly, and covers itself under more disguises than pride. For my own part, I think if there is any passion or vice which I am wholly a stranger to, it is this; though at the same time, perhaps, this very judgment which I form of myself proceeds in some measure from this corrupt principle.

I have been always wonderfully delighted with that sentence in Holy Writ—“Pride was not made for man.” There is not, indeed, any single view of human nature, under its present condition, which is not sufficient to extinguish in us all the secret seeds of pride; and, on the contrary, to sink the soul into the lowest state of humility, and what the schoolmen call self-annihilation. Pride was not made for man, as he is,

1. A sinful,
2. An ignorant,
3. A miserable being.

There is nothing in his understanding, in his will, or in his present condition, that can tempt any considerate creature to pride and vanity.

These three very reasons why he should not be

proud, are notwithstanding the reasons why he is so. Were he not a sinful creature, he would not be subject to a passion which rises from the depravity of his nature ; were he not an ignorant creature, he would see that he has nothing to be proud of ; and were not the whole species miserable, he would not have those wretched objects of compassion before his eyes, which are the occasions of this passion, and which make one man value himself more than another.

A wise man will be contented that his glory be deferred until such time as he shall be truly glorified ; when his understanding shall be cleared, his will rectified, and his happiness assured ; or, in other words, when he shall be neither sinful, nor ignorant, nor miserable.

If there be any thing which makes human nature appear ridiculous to beings of superior faculties, it must be pride. They know so well the vanity of these imaginary perfections that swell the heart of man, and of those little super-numerary advantages, whether in birth, fortune, or title, which one man enjoys above another, that it must certainly very much astonish, if it does not very much divert them, when they see a mortal puffed up, and valuing himself above his neighbours on any of these accounts, at the same time that he is obnoxious to all the common calamities of the species.

To set this thought in its true light, we will fancy, if you please, that yonder mole-hill is inhabited by reasonable creatures, and that every pismire (his shape and way of life only excepted) is endowed with human passions. How should

we smile to hear one give us an account of the pedigrees, distinctions, and titles that reign among them! Observe how the whole swarm divide and make way for the pismire that passes through them! You must understand that he is an emmet of quality, and has better blood in his veins than any pismire in the mole-hill. Do not you see how sensible he is of it, how slow he marches forward, how the whole rabble of ants keep their distance? Here you may observe one placed upon a little eminence, and looking down on a long row of labourers. He is the richest insect on this side the hillock; he has a walk of half a yard in length, and a quarter of an inch in breadth; he keeps a hundred menial servants, and has at least fifteen barley-corns in his granary. He is now chiding and beslaving the emmet that stands before him; and who, for all that we can discover, is as good an emmet as himself.

But here comes an insect of figure! Do not you take notice of a little white straw that he carries in his mouth? That straw, you must understand, he would not part with for the longest tract about the mole-hill: did you but know what he has undergone to purchase it! See how the ants of all qualities and conditions swarm about him! Should this straw drop out of his mouth, you would see all this numerous circle of attendants follow the next that took it up, and leave the discarded insect, or run over his back to come at his successor.

If now you have a mind to see all the ladies of the mole-hill, observe first the pismire that listens

to the emmet on her left hand, at the same time that she seems to turn away her head from him. He tells this poor insect that she is a goddess, that her eyes are brighter than the sun, that life and death are at her disposal. She believes him, and gives herself a thousand little airs upon it. Mark the vanity of the pismire on your left hand : she can scarce crawl with age ; but you must know she values herself upon her birth ; and, if you mind, spurns at every one that comes within her reach. The little nimble coquet that is running along by the side of her is a wit : she has broke many a pismire's heart. Do but observe what a drove of lovers are running after her.

We will here finish this imaginary scene ; but first of all, to draw the parallel closer, will suppose, if you please, that death comes down upon the mole-hill, in the shape of a cock-sparrow, who picks up, without distinction, the pismire of quality and his flatterers, the pismire of substance and his day-labourers, the white-straw officer and his sycophants, with all the goddesses, wits, and beauties of the mole-hill.

May we not imagine that beings of superior natures and perfections regard all the instances of pride and vanity, among our species, in the same kind of view, when they take a survey of those who inhabit the earth ; or, in the language of an ingenious French poet, of those pismires that people this heap of dirt, which human vanity has divided in climates and regions.

ADDISON.

THE SAILOR'S WIDOW.

THE coast of Cornwall is in many parts most rugged, inhospitable, and treacherous. The barren rocks, that rise to an immense height above the ocean, have often, as it were, their little, but more dangerous dependencies, that stand apparently isolated in the sea, but whose connecting links may be clearly discerned at low water. They are frequently so distant as to lure the pilot to attempt to pass between those points of danger and the main land; but sad is then the fate of his good vessel and its crew, for the wreck is certain; a misfortune of more frequent occurrence is that in which the darkness and the tempest appear to league with the rocks, and to be the ready slaves of destruction and death.

The fate of the noble vessel, the *Mary* of London, will be long remembered in Penzance. She had made her voyage to New York, and was returning with a full cargo to recompense her owner and her crew. Their dangers were nearly at an end, and, strolling upon the deck, the home-bound seamen were conversing on those topics so dear to the long absent—their wives, their parents, their children, their friends. Suddenly the weather changed; the storm rose; the clouds grew darker and darker; all hands were at work; and all were ready to combat, for they had often conquered, the tempest in its wrath.

It was now midnight, and so dark that the crew could not discern an object at the distance of a yard; not a single star shone in the heavens;

and the white surf, which the bounding wave now and then flung toward the sky, was the only thing that could be distinguished from the deep blackness which was above and around. The lightning and the thunder had both ceased, but the wind beat furiously against the vessel, and drove her wildly forward between the billows that spent their rage upon her hulk. The sails had long been furled; the guns had been thrown overboard, save the solitary one that every minute told the tale of distress to nought but the unheeding and pitiless element. The pilot had lashed the helm, for he was ignorant of his course; and the vessel proceeded on, amid the splash of the waves and the roaring of the tempest, whose mercy was its only hope.

The seamen were scattered about the deck; many of them were tried and weatherbeaten veterans, who gazed upon the elemental war as on a scene of which habit had made them fearless; others conversed in whispers, at every pause which the tempest made; some had given themselves up to despair, and had lain quietly down to await the result; few, and but a few, had determined to die like cowards, or like brutes, and had drowned their reason, to prepare for the body's death: one man was on his knees lifting up his soul to that God, to whom he knew the tempest was but as the gentle south wind.

Suddenly the pilot, who stood with his arms folded beside the useless rudder, exclaimed—"Captain, I see a light!" The words passed round the vessel like electric fluid, and the sea-

men gazed intently in every direction; but all was dark. "It must have been a mistake," said the captain; "or perhaps it was a shooting star." The pilot, however, persevered in declaring that he had seen a glimmer ahead. While they were deliberating as to what course they were to pursue, the seamen had gathered round, and were listening in breathless anxiety to the conversation.

The captain had just ordered one of his men to go aloft, and be upon the look out, when they heard a distant rumbling sound, like the splash of waters in some rocky cave. There was a pause, and a look of horror. In another instant the sound became fearfully audible; and a loud shriek of "the breakers! the breakers!" was echoed by every voice; in a moment the vessel dashed upon the rocks.

The morning had not dawned when I was awakened by the news of the wreck. I hastily dressed myself, and hurried down to the beach. It was covered with the dead bodies of the ship's crew, and the many other fatal proofs of the night's misfortune. The rocks on which the vessel had gone to pieces, were so near to the main land, that a high cliff, communicating with it, must have been actually touched by her bowsprit at the moment she struck; and if the moon had shone in her brightness, or the stars had not been all hidden by the dense clouds, it is more than probable that the lives of the hapless crew would have been saved.—Above the cliffs was a shepherd's hut, from the lattice of which had glimmered the light that the pilot had seen. At

the instant, the shepherd, with a candle in his hand, was passing the window to his rest, unconscious of the fate that at the moment awaited so many of his fellow-creatures. The howling of the tempest had so completely drowned the voices of the sufferers, that he had not heard their shrieks, but had slept calmly, while the poor wretches sunk beneath the waves that knew no pity, and that gave no moment for preparation ere they destroyed,—that struggled with their victims, so as to take from them every reflection, every thought, but of the momentary effort that left them an easier prey.

Among the cottagers who had busied themselves in collecting together the various articles that the retired waves had left upon the strand, there were not wanting many to seek if there were any living among the dead. Three only of the whole crew were found alive, and these were restored almost from the very grave by the perseverance of the benevolent surgeon of the neighbouring village.

The corpse of the captain was discovered, and his faithful dog dead beside it. The day after the melancholy occurrence, the bodies of twenty-four seamen were interred in the village churchyard. Hundreds of men and women attended the funeral, and there seemed to be but one feeling of deep sorrow among them all. There were present no immediate friends of the dead—no father to look for the last time on the corpse of his son,—no son to weep as the dust of the graveyard was heaped over the dust of the being who gave him life—no widow to depart from the sad

sight into a desolate world, her prop broken, and her main link to life untied—but there were many to mourn over those who had thus perished, when their hopes were most high, and their prospects most bright.

Among the various articles that floated to the shore, was a trunk, that was publicly opened for the purpose of ascertaining who had been its ill fated owner. It contained, among other things, a bundle of letters carefully wrapped together. They had been but little injured, and when dried I was enabled to peruse them. They were the letters of a wife to her husband, written in all that calm confidence and affection which can only be the fruit of virtuous love. From their contents I discovered that the writer had been but a short time married, and that the voyage was the first her husband had made. It appeared also, from many allusions, that their marriage had taken place without the consent of her friends. In some of them she spoke of the child she expected to bring into the world; and in others, of its birth: one letter contained a small portion of its hair. The letters were all exceedingly interesting; they had evidently been written by a person deeply under the influence of religion; for every one of them contained a prayer to that God who governs the deep, and who rules the land, that whether on sea or on shore, He would be the protector of her husband. It was plain also, that the writer was labouring under severe pecuniary distress; with the occasional statements of her distress, there was mingled a feeling of delicacy, as if she alluded to it merely to express

her dependance on Him who will not see the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread. Those letters were peculiarly affecting when they in any way referred to her child. The mother would frequently tell the father how easily she could trace the features of her husband in the countenance of her babe ; and dwell with the greatest delight on the anticipation of what he would say to his boy when he had returned from his voyage, to clasp the little one, for the first time, in a father's arms. It was evident that the sentiments and feelings of the wife were those of the husband ; for many of the letters, which were written in reply to others, contained encouragements to persevere in fighting the good fight of faith, by which a crown of glory was to be won.

I read those letters with feelings of peculiar sorrow and sympathy, and in those feelings a great many of my friends participated. Their exertions added to my own, succeeded in raising a sum of money for the widow of the shipwrecked seaman ; and it was enclosed to her a short time after her melancholy loss.

In the course of a few months my business obliged me to visit the metropolis ; and immediately on my arrival, with a melancholy pleasure, I proceeded to the lodging of the poor young widow ; and was admitted into her humble apartment. She was in the act of dressing her infant, and I instantly perceived that she had added a little border of black crape to the cap of the orphaned babe. I introduced myself to her as Mr. ——— of Penzance. She rose from her seat and welcomed me with that smile of grateful

pleasure which may be the fourfold reward promised in Scripture to the comforter of the afflicted.

Her story was very interesting. After having related to me some circumstances connected with her situation and her marriage, she spoke of her feelings when she heard of her husband's death. "I had long expected my husband home," she continued, "and every day, from morning until night, and from night till morning, I had listened in the hope of hearing his footsteps on the stair; as I looked, with those feelings which none but a mother and a wife can know, upon my baby's face, and asked myself to which of the two he would first give his embrace. On the night I received the information that my child was an orphan and I was a widow, I was sitting by my fireside, and expecting him every moment. My little one was sleeping in his cradle; and, as I had done every day for weeks before, I had laid his clothes before the fire to air, in order that he might change them when he came home. I had but one shilling in the world, and that shilling I had kept untouched for many days, that I might be enabled to procure him something to eat or to drink on his return. I heard a footstep, but I knew it was not his, and a gentle knock upon the door; when the clerk of the owner of my husband's vessel came in. I thought his visit was to inform me of the arrival of the vessel: with a slowness of apprehension that made the blow fall heavier, I understood none of his hints; and it was with some difficulty that the young gentleman could make me conscious of the dreadful event.

“When my reason returned, I fell upon my knees and poured out my whole soul in communion with my Creator. Blessed be his name, he gave me strength to bear the calamity that I thought had left me no other friend—blessed be his name, he enabled me to remember, that ‘whom he loveth he chasteneth,’ and that often

Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face.

I flew to my Bible, and I sought and found consolation in the word of Him, who hath promised to be a father to my fatherless babe.

“I calmly took his clothes from before the fire, and laid them carefully in the drawer; kissed my little one; and prayed to God more tranquilly than I had before done. I did not want even for earthly friends; the members of our society had heard of, and pitied my misfortune, and they visited me in my distress. In a few days afterward I received the subscription of the benevolent friends, although strangers, at Penzance. It will enable me to form some plan of support for myself and my orphan, and the God of mercy will bless my exertions.”

ANONYMOUS.

ALCANDER AND SEPTIMIUS.

ATHENS, even long after the decline of the Roman empire, still continued the seat of learning, politeness, and wisdom. The emperors and generals, who in these periods of approaching ignorance still felt a passion for science, from time to time added to its buildings, or increased its professor-

ships. Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, was of the number ; he repaired those schools which barbarity was suffering to fall into decay, and continued those pensions to men of learning which avaricious governors had monopolized to themselves.

In this city, and about this period, Alcander and Septimius were fellow students together. The one the most subtle reasoner of all the Lyceum ; the other the most eloquent speaker in the academic grove. Mutual admiration soon begot an acquaintance, and a similitude of disposition made them perfect friends. Their fortunes were nearly equal, their studies the same, and they were natives of the two most celebrated cities in the world ; for Alcander was of Athens, Septimius came from Rome.

In this mutual harmony they lived for some time together, when Alcander, after passing the first part of his youth in the indolence of philosophy, thought at length of entering into the busy world, and as a step previous to this, placed his affections on Hypatia, a lady of exquisite beauty. Hypatia showed no dislike to his addresses. The day of their intended nuptials was fixed, the previous ceremonies were performed, and nothing now remained but her being conducted in triumph to the apartment of the intended bridegroom.

An exultation in his own happiness, or his being unable to enjoy any satisfaction without making his friend Septimius a partner, prevailed upon him to introduce his mistress to his fellow student, which he did with all the gaiety of a man who found himself equally happy in friend-

ship and love. But this was an interview fatal to the peace of both. Septimius no sooner saw her, but he was smit with an involuntary passion. He used every effort, but in vain, to suppress desires at once so imprudent and unjust. He retired to his apartment in inexpressible agony; and the emotions of his mind in a short time became so strong, that they brought on a fever, which the physicians judged incurable.

During this illness Alcander watched him with all the anxiety of fondness, and brought his mistress to join in those amiable offices of friendship. The sagacity of the physicians, by this means, soon discovered the cause of their patient's disorder; and Alcander, being apprized of their discovery, at length extorted a confession from the reluctant dying lover.

It would but delay the narrative to describe the conflict between love and friendship in the breast of Alcander on this occasion; it is enough to say, that the Athenians were at this time arrived to such refinement in morals, that every virtue was carried to excess. In short, forgetful of his own felicity, he gave up his intended bride, in all her charms, to the young Roman. They were married privately by his connivance; and this unlooked-for change of fortune wrought as unexpected a change in the constitution of the now happy Septimius. In a few days he was perfectly recovered, and set out with his fair partner for Rome. Here, by an exertion of those talents of which he was so eminently possessed, he in a few years arrived at the highest dignities of the state, and was constituted the city judge, or prætor.

Meanwhile Alcander not only felt the pain of being separated from his friend and mistress, but a prosecution was also commenced against him by the relations of Hypatia, for his having basely given her up, as was suggested, for money. Neither his innocence of the crime laid to his charge, nor his eloquence in his own defence, was able to withstand the influence of a powerful party.

He was cast, and condemned to pay an enormous fine. Unable to raise so large a sum at the time appointed, his possessions were confiscated, himself stripped of the habit of freedom, exposed in the marketplace, and sold as a slave to the highest bidder.

A merchant of Thrace becoming his purchaser, Alcander, with some other companions of distress, was carried into the region of desolation and sterility. His stated employment was to follow the herds of an imperious master, and his skill in hunting was all that was allowed him to supply a precarious subsistence. Condemned to hopeless servitude, every morning waked him to renewal of famine or toil, and every change of season served but to aggravate his unsheltered distress. Nothing but death or flight was left him, and almost certain death was the consequence of his attempting to fly. After some years of bondage, however, an opportunity of escaping offered; he embraced it with ardour, and travelling by night, and lodging in caverns by day, to shorten a long story, he at last arrived in Rome. The day of Alcander's arrival, Septimius sat in the forum administering justice; and hither our wanderer came, expecting to be

instantly known and publicly acknowledged. Here he stood the whole day among the crowd, watching the eyes of the judge, and expecting to be taken notice of, but so much was he altered by a long succession of hardships, that he passed entirely without notice ; and in the evening, when he was going up to the prætor's chair, he was brutally repulsed by the attending lictors. The attention of the poor is generally driven from one ungrateful object to another. Night coming on, he now found himself under a necessity of seeking a place to lie in, and yet knew not where to apply. All emaciated and in rags as he was, none of the citizens would harbour so much wretchedness, and sleeping in the streets might be attended with interruption or danger ; in short, he was obliged to take up his lodging in one of the tombs without the city, the usual retreat of guilt, poverty, or despair.

In this mansion of horror, laying his head upon an inverted urn, he forgot his miseries for awhile in sleep ; and virtue found on this flinty couch more ease than down can supply to the guilty.

It was midnight, when two robbers came to make this cave their retreat, but happening to disagree about the division of their plunder one of them stabbed the other to the heart, and left him weltering in blood at the entrance. In these circumstances he was found next morning, and this naturally induced a further inquiry. The alarm was spread, the cave was examined, Alcander was found sleeping, and immediately apprehended and accused of robbery and murder. The circumstances against him were strong, and

the wretchedness of his appearance confirmed suspicion. Misfortune and he were now so long acquainted, that he at last became regardless of life. He detested a world where he had found only ingratitude, falsehood, and cruelty, and was determined to make no defence. Thus lowering with resolution, he was dragged, bound with cords, before the tribunal of Septimius. The proofs were positive against him, and he offered nothing in his own vindication; the judge, therefore, was proceeding to doom him to a most cruel and ignominious death, when, as if illumined by a ray from Heaven, he discovered, through all his misery, the features, though dim with sorrow, of his long lost, loved Alcander. It is impossible to describe his joy and his pain on this strange occasion; happy in once more seeing the person he most loved on earth, distressed at finding him in such circumstances. Thus agitated by contending passions, he flew from his tribunal, and falling on the neck of his dear benefactor, burst into an agony of distress. The attention of the multitude was soon, however, divided by another object. The robber, who had been really guilty, was apprehended selling his plunder, and, struck with a panic, confessed his crime. He was brought bound to the same tribunal, and acquitted every other person of any partnership in his guilt. Need the sequel be related? Alcander was acquitted, shared the friendship and the honours of his friend Septimius, lived afterwards in happiness and ease, and left it to be engraved on his tomb, 'That no circumstances are so desperate which Providence may not relieve.'

GOLDSMITH.

THE VISION OF CARAZAN.

CARAZAN, the merchant of Bagdad, was eminent throughout all the East for his avarice and his wealth: his origin was obscure as that of the spark, which by the collision of steel and adamant is struck out of darkness: and the patient labour of persevering diligence alone had made him rich. It was remembered, that when he was indigent, he was thought to be generous; and he was still acknowledged to be inexorably just. But whether in his dealings with men he discovered a perfidy which tempted him to put his trust in gold, or whether in proportion as he accumulated wealth he discovered his own importance to increase, Carazan prized it more as he used it less; he gradually lost the inclination to do good as he acquired the power: and as the hand of time scattered snow upon his head, the freezing influence extended to his bosom.

But though the door of Carazan was never opened by hospitality, nor his hand by compassion, yet fear led him constantly to the mosque at the stated hours of prayer; he performed all the rites of devotion with the most scrupulous punctuality, and had thrice paid his vows at the temple of the prophet. That devotion which arises from the love of God, and necessarily includes the love of man, as it connects gratitude with beneficence, and exalts that which was moral to divine, confers new dignity upon goodness, and is the object not only of affection but reverence. On the contrary, the devotion of the

selfish, whether it be thought to avert the punishment which every one wishes to be inflicted, or to insure by the complication of hypocrisy with guilt, never fails to excite indignation and abhorrence. Carazan, therefore, when he had locked his door, and turning round with a look of circumpective suspicion, proceeded to the mosque, was followed by every eye with silent malignity; the poor suspended their supplication when he passed by; and though he was known to every man, yet no man saluted him.

Such had long been the life of Carazan, and such was the character which he had acquired, when notice was given by proclamation that he was removed to a magnificent building in the centre of the city, that his table should be spread for the public, and that the stranger should be welcome to his bed. The multitude soon rushed like a torrent to his door, where they beheld him distributing bread to the hungry, and apparel to the naked, his eye softened with compassion, and his cheek glowing with delight. Every one gazed with astonishment at the prodigy; and the murmur of innumerable voices increasing like the sound of approaching thunder, Carazan beckoned with his hand; attention suspended the tumult in a moment, and he thus gratified the curiosity which had procured him audience:

“To Him who touches the mountains and they smoke—the Almighty and the most Merciful, be everlasting honour! he has ordained sleep to be the minister of instruction, and his visions have reproved me in the night. As I was sitting alone in my harem, with my lamp burning before

me, computing the product of my merchandise, and exulting in the increase of my wealth, I fell into a deep sleep, and the hand of him who dwells in the third heaven was upon me. I beheld the angel of death coming forward like a whirlwind, and he smote me before I could deprecate the blow. At the same moment I felt myself lifted from the ground, and transported with astonishing rapidity through the regions of the air. The earth was contracted to an atom beneath ; and the stars glowed round me with a lustre that obscured the sun. The gate of Paradise was now in sight ; and I was intercepted by a sudden brightness which no human eye could behold : the irrevocable sentence was now to be pronounced : my day of probation was past : and from the evil of my life nothing could be taken away, nor could any thing be added to the good. When I reflected that my lot for eternity was cast, which not all the powers of nature could reverse, my confidence totally forsook me ; and while I stood trembling and silent, covered with confusion and chilled with horror, I was thus addressed by the radiance that stood before me :—

“ “ Carazan, thy worship has not been accepted, because it was not prompted by the love of God, neither can thy righteousness be rewarded ; because it was not produced by love of man : for thy sake only hast thou rendered to every man his due ; and thou hast approached the Almighty only for thyself. Thou hast not looked up with gratitude, nor around thee with kindness. Around thee thou hast indeed beheld vice and folly ; but

if vice and folly could justify thy parsimony, would they not condemn the bounty of Heaven? If not upon the foolish and the vicious, where shall the sun diffuse his light, or the clouds distil their dew? Where shall the lips of the spring breathe fragrance, or the hand of autumn diffuse plenty? Remember, Carazan, that thou hast shut compassion from thine heart, and grasped thy treasures with a hand of iron: thou hast lived for thyself; and, therefore, henceforth, for ever thou shalt subsist alone. From the light of heaven, and from the society of all beings, shalt thou be driven; solitude shall protract the lingering hours of eternity, and darkness aggravate the horrors of despair.'

"At this moment I was driven by some secret and irresistible power through the glowing system of creation, and passed innumerable worlds in a moment. As I approached the verge of nature, I perceived the shadows of total and boundless vacuity deeper before me, a dreadful region of eternal silence, solitude, and darkness! Unutterable horror seized me at the prospect, and this exclamation burst from me with all the vehemence of desire: 'Oh! that I had been doomed for ever to the common receptacle of impenitence and guilt! there society would have alleviated the torment of despair, and the rage of fire could not have excluded the comfort of light. Or if I had been condemned to reside in a comet, that would return but once in a thousand years to the regions of light and life, the hope of these periods, however distant, would cheer me in the dread interval of cold and darkness, and the vicissitudes

would divide eternity into time.' While this thought passed over my mind, I lost sight of the remotest star, and the last glimmering of light was quenched in utter darkness. The agonies of despair every moment increased, as every moment augmented my distance from the less habitable world. I reflected with intolerable anguish that when ten thousand thousand years had carried me beyond the reach of all but that Power who fills infinitude, I should still look forward into an immense abyss of darkness, through which I should still drive without succour and without society, farther and farther still, for ever and for ever. I then stretched out my hand towards the regions of existence, with an emotion that awakened me. Thus have I been taught to estimate society, like every other blessing, by its loss. My heart is warmed to liberality; and I am zealous to communicate the happiness that I feel to those from whom it is derived; for the society of one wretch whom, in the pride of prosperity, I would have spurned from my door, would, in the dreadful solitude to which I was condemned, have been more highly prized than the gold of Africa or the gems of Golconda."

At this reflection upon his dream Carazan became suddenly silent, and looked upward in ecstasy of gratitude and devotion. The multitude were struck at once with the precept and example; and the caliph, to whom the event was related, that he might be liberal beyond the power of gold, commanded it to be recorded for the benefit of posterity.

HAWKESWORTH.

THE
HANDSOME AND THE DEFORMED LEG.

THERE are two sorts of people in the world, who, with equal degrees of health and wealth, and the other comforts of life, become, the one happy, and the other miserable. This arises very much from the different views in which they consider things, persons, and events, and the effect of those different views upon their minds.

In whatever situation men can be placed they may find conveniences and inconveniences ; in whatever company, they may find persons and conversation more or less pleasing ; at whatever table, they may meet with meats and drinks of better and worse taste, dishes better and worse dressed ; in whatever climate, they will find good and bad weather ; under whatever government, they may find good and bad laws, and good and bad administration of those laws ; in whatever poem, or work of genius, they may see faults and beauties ; in almost every face and every person, they may discover fine features and defects, good and bad qualities.

Under these circumstances, the two sorts of people above mentioned fix their attention ; those who are disposed to be happy, on the conveniences of things, the pleasant parts of conversation, the well dressed dishes, the goodness of the wines, the fine weather, &c. and enjoy all with cheerfulness : those who are to be unhappy, think and speak only of the contraries. Hence

they are continually discontented with themselves, and, by their remarks, sour the pleasures of society, offend personally many people, and make themselves every where disagreeable. If this turn of mind was founded in nature, such unhappy persons would be the more to be pitied; but, as the disposition to criticise, and to be disgusted, is, perhaps, taken up originally by imitation, and is, unawares, grown into a habit, which, though at present strong, may nevertheless be cured when those who have it are convinced of its bad effects on their felicity; I hope this little admonition may be of service to them, and put them on changing a habit which, though in the exercise it is chiefly an act of imagination, yet has serious consequences in life, as it brings on real griefs and misfortunes; for, as many are offended by, and nobody loves, this sort of people, no one shows them more than the most common civility and respect, and scarcely that; and this frequently puts them out of humour, and draws them into disputes and contentions. If they aim at obtaining some advantage in rank or fortune, nobody wishes them success, or will stir a step, or speak a word, to favour their pretensions. If they incur public censure or disgrace, no one will defend or excuse, and many join to aggravate their misconduct, and render them completely odious. If these people will not change this bad habit, and condescend to be pleased with what is pleasing, without fretting themselves and others about the contraries, it is good for others to avoid an acquaintance with them, which is

always disagreeable, and sometimes very inconvenient, especially when one finds one's self entangled in their quarrels.

An old philosophical friend of mine was grown, from experience, very cautious in this particular, and carefully avoided any intimacy with such people. He had, like other philosophers, a thermometer, to show him the heat of the weather, and a barometer, to mark when it was likely to prove good or bad ; but there being no instrument invented to discover, at first sight, this unpleasing disposition in a person, he, for that purpose, made use of his legs, one of which was remarkably handsome, the other, by some accident, crooked and deformed. If a stranger, at the first interview, regarded his ugly leg more than his handsome one, he doubted him. If he spoke of it, and took no notice of the handsome leg, that was sufficient to determine my philosopher to have no further acquaintance with him. Every body has not this two legged instrument ; but every one, with a little attention, may observe signs of that carping, fault-finding disposition, and take the same resolution of avoiding the acquaintance of those infected with it. I therefore advise those critical, querulous, discontented, unhappy people, that if they wish to be respected and beloved by others, and happy in themselves, they should *leave off looking at the ugly leg.*

FRANKLIN.

THE
WONDERS OF THE MICROSCOPE.

I HAVE lately applied myself with much satisfaction to the curious discoveries that have been made by the help of microscopes, as they are related by authors of our own and other nations. There is a great deal of pleasure in prying into this world of wonders, which nature has laid out of sight, and seems industrious to conceal from us. Philosophy had ranged over all the visible creation, and began to want objects for her inquiries, when the present age, by the invention of glasses, opened a new and inexhaustible magazine of rarities, more wonderful and amazing than any of those which astonished our forefathers. I was yesterday amusing myself with speculations of this kind, and reflecting upon myriads of animals that swim in those little seas of juices that are contained in the several vessels of a human body. While my mind was thus filled with that secret wonder and delight, I could not but look upon myself as in an act of devotion, and am very well pleased with the thought of the great heathen anatomist, who calls his description of the parts of a human body, "A Hymn to the Supreme Being." The reading of the day produced in my imagination an agreeable morning's dream, if I may call it such; for I am still in doubt whether it passed in my sleeping or waking thoughts. However it was, I fancied that my good genius stood at

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my bed's head, and entertained me with the following discourse ; for, upon my rising, it dwelt so strongly upon me, that I writ down the substance of it, if not the very words.

“ If,” said he, “ you can be so transported with those productions of nature which are discovered to you by those artificial eyes that are the works of human invention, how great will your surprise be, when you shall have it in your power to model your own eye as you please, and adapt it to the bulk of objects, which, with all these helps, are by infinite degrees too minute for your perception ! We, who are unbodied spirits, can sharpen our sight to what we think fit, and make the least work of the creation distinct and visible. This gives us such ideas as cannot possibly enter into your present conceptions. There is not the least particle of matter which may not furnish one of us sufficient employment for a whole eternity. We can still divide it, and still open it, and still discover new wonders of Providence, as we look into the different texture of its parts, and meet with beds of vegetables, minerals, and metallic mixtures, and several kind of animals that lie hid, and as it were lost, in such an endless fund of matter. I find you are surprised at this discourse ; but, as your reason tells you there are infinite parts in the smallest portion of matter, it will likewise convince you that there is as great a variety of secrets, and as much room for discoveries, in a particle no bigger than the point of a pin, as in the globe of the whole earth. Your microscopes bring to sight shoals of living creatures in a

spoonful of vinegar ; but we, who can distinguish them in their different magnitudes, see among them several huge leviathans that terrify the little fry of animals about them, and take their pastime as in an ocean, or the great deep."

I could not but smile at this part of his relation, and told him, " I doubted not but he could give me the history of several invisible giants, accompanied with their respective dwarfs, in case that any of these little beings are of a human shape." " You may assure yourself," said he, " that we see in these little animals different natures, instincts, and modes of life, which correspond to what you observe in creatures of bigger dimensions. We descry millions of species subsisting on a green leaf, which your glasses represent only in crowds and swarms. What appears to your eye but as hair or down rising on the surface of it, we find to be woods and forests, inhabited by beasts of prey, that are as dreadful in those their little haunts as lions and tigers in the deserts of Libya." I was much delighted with his discourse, and could not forbear telling him, " That I should be wonderfully pleased to see a natural history of imperceptibles, containing a true account of such vegetables and animals as grow and live out of sight." " Such disquisitions," answered he, " are very suitable to reasonable creatures ; and you may be sure there are many curious spirits among us, who employ themselves in such amusements. For as our hands, and all our senses, may be formed to what degree of strength and delicacy we please, in the same manner as our sight, we can make

what experiments we are inclined to, how small soever the matter be in which we make them. I have been present at the dissection of a mite, and have seen the skeleton of a flea. I have been shown a forest of numberless trees, which have been picked out of an acorn. Your microscope can show you in it a complete oak, which contains another tree : and so proceed from tree to tree, as long as you would think fit to continue your disquisitions. It is almost impossible," added he, "to talk of things so remote from common life, and the ordinary notions which mankind receive from blunt and gross organs of sense, without appearing extravagant and ridiculous. You have often seen a dog opened, to observe the circulation of the blood, or make any other inquiry ; and yet would be tempted to laugh if I should tell you that a circle of much greater philosophers than any of the Royal Society were present at the cutting up of one of those little animals which we find in the blue of a plumb : that it was tied down alive before them ; and that they observed the palpitations of the heart and the course of the blood, the working of the muscles, and the convulsions in the several limbs, with great accuracy and improvement." "I must confess," said I, "for my own part, I go along with you in all your discoveries with great pleasure ; but it is certain, they are too fine for the gross of mankind, who are more struck with the description of every thing that is great and bulky. Accordingly we find the best judge of human nature setting forth his wisdom, not in the formation of those minute animals,

though indeed no less wonderful than the other, but in that of the leviathan and behemoth, the horse and the crocodile." "Your observation," said he, "is very just, and I must acknowledge, for my own part, that although it is with much delight that I see the traces of Providence in these instances, I still take greater pleasure in considering the works of the creation in their immensity than in their minuteness. For this reason, I rejoice when I strengthen my sight so as to make it pierce into the most remote spaces, and take a view of those heavenly bodies which lie out of the reach of human eyes, though assisted by telescopes. What you look upon as one confused white in the milky way, appears to me a long track of heavens, distinguished by stars that are ranged in proper figures and constellations. While you are admiring the sky in the starry night, I am entertained with a variety of worlds and suns placed one above another, and rising up to such an immense distance, that no created eye can see the end of them."

The latter part of his discourse flung me into such an astonishment, that he had been silent for some time before I took notice of it: when on a sudden I started up, and drew my curtains, to look if any one was near me, but saw nobody, and cannot tell to this moment whether it was my good genius or a dream that left me.

ADDISON.

THE HISTORY OF ABOUZAID, THE SON OF MORAD.

AMONG the emirs and visiers, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne, to assist the councils, or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the first place was long held by Morad, the son of Hanuth. Morad having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wafted to the pinnacles of Agra, by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The emperor called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the keys of riches and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Ionian ocean, every tongue faltered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity; every day increased his wealth and extended his influence, the sages repeated his maxims, the captains of thousands waited his commands, Competition withdrew into the cavern of Envy, and Discontent trembled at her own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad, the clouds of sorrow gathered around his head, and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that forsook him were his poets; their ex-

ample was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures, and only a few whose virtue had entitled them to favour were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud, his friends stood contented with frigid neutrality, and the voice of truth was overborne by clamour. He was divested of his power, deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants and flattery, that he knew not how to fill up his hours in solitude; he saw with regret the sun rise to force on his eye a new day, for which he had no use; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey, or sleeping in his den.

His discontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physic, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch, peevish and restless, rather afraid to die than desirous to live. His domestics, for a time, redoubled their assiduities: but finding that no officiousness could soothe, nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth, and he that once commanded nations often languished in his chamber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state he commanded messengers to recall his eldest son, Abouzaid, from the army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account

of his father's sickness, and hastened by long journeys to his place of residence. Morad was yet living, and felt his strength return at the embraces of his son, then commanding him to sit down at his bedside, "Abouzaid," says he, "thy father has no more to hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth, the cold hand of the angel of death is now upon him, and the voracious grave is howling for his prey. Hear, therefore, the precepts of ancient experience; let not my last instructions issue forth in vain. Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous, thou hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My power is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures have rewarded my accusers; but my inheritance the clemency of the emperor has spared, and my wisdom his anger could not take away. Cast thine eyes round thee, and whatever thou beholdest will in a few hours be thine; apply thine ear to my dictates, and these possessions will promote thy happiness. Aspire not to public honour, enter not the palaces of kings; thy wealth will set thee above insult, let thy moderation keep thee below envy. Content thyself with private dignity, diffuse thy riches among thy friends, let every day extend thy beneficence, and suffer not thy heart to be at rest till thou art loved by all to whom thou art known. In the height of my power I said to defamation, who will hear thee? and to artifice, what canst thou perform? But, my son, despise not thou the malice of the weakest, remember that venom supplies the want of strength, and that the lion may perish by the puncture of an asp."

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid,

after the months of mourning, determined to regulate his conduct by his father's precepts, and cultivate the love of mankind by every art of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered, that domestic happiness was first to be secured, and that none have so much power of doing good or hurt as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the burst of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants, and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers, who, being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of his servants; the servant immediately confessed that he unbarred the door, because another not more worthy of confidence was entrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced that a dependant could not easily be made a friend; and that while many were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions, selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought himself at liberty to indulge his own caprice and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations and differences of sentiments, and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterwards determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a large circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy, and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship now refused to accept his acquaintance; and of those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward toward intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured because he was not distinguished above the rest. By degrees all made advances, and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the music resounded in empty rooms, and Abouzaid was left to form in solitude some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science, whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wantoned in unexperienced plenty, and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which they had been rescued, and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs and dismissed them, and from that hour continued blind to colours and deaf to panegyric.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. "Hamet,"

said he, "thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments: I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be rewarded by human benevolence; I shall henceforth do good and avoid evil, without respect to the opinion of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him."

JOHNSON.

THE TRIAL OF MELANCHOLY.

IN one of my midnight rambles down the side of the Trent, the river which waters the place of my nativity, as I was musing on the various evils which darken the life of man, and which have their rise in the malevolence and ill nature of his fellows, the sound of a flute from an adjoining copse attracted my attention. The tune it played was mournful yet soothing. It was suited to the solemnity of the hour. As the distant notes came wafted at intervals on my ear, now with gradual swell, then dying away on the silence of the night, I felt the tide of indignation subside within me, and gave place to the solemn calm of repose. I listened for some time in breathless ravishment. The strain ceased, yet the sounds still vibrated on my heart, and the visions of bliss which they excited still glowed on my imagination. I was then standing in one of my favourite retreats. It was a little alcove, overshadowed with willows, and a mossy seat at the back invited to rest. I laid myself listlessly on the bank. The Trent

murmured softly at my feet, and the willows sighed as they waved over my head. It was the holy moment of repose, and I soon sunk into a deep sleep. The operations of fancy in a slumber, induced by a combination of circumstances so powerful and uncommon, could not fail to be wild and romantic in the extreme. Methought I found myself in an extensive area, filled with an immense concourse of people. At one end was a throne of adamant, on which sat a female, in whose aspect I immediately recognised a divinity. She was clad in a garb of azure, on her forehead she bore a sun, whose splendour the eyes of many were unable to bear, and whose rays illumine the whole space and penetrated into the deepest recesses of darkness. The aspect of the goddess at a distance was forbidding, but on a nearer approach it was mild and engaging. Her eyes were blue and piercing, and there was a fascination in her smile which charmed as if by enchantment. The air of intelligence which beamed in her look made the beholder shrink into himself with the consciousness of inferiority; yet the affability of her deportment, and the simplicity and gentleness of her manners, soon reassured him, while the bewitching softness which she could at times assume, won his permanent esteem. On inquiry of a bystander who it was that sat on the throne, and what was the occasion of so uncommon an assembly, he informed me that it was the Goddess of wisdom, who had at last succeeded in regaining the dominion of the earth, which Folly had so long usurped. That she sat there in her judicial capacity, in order to try the

merits of many who were supposed to be the secret emissaries of Folly. In this way I understood Envy and Malevolence had been sentenced to perpetual banishment, though several of their adherents yet remained among men, whose minds were too gross to be irradiated with the light of wisdom. One trial I understood was just ended and another supposed delinquent was about to be put to the bar. With much curiosity I hurried forward to survey the figure which now approached. She was habited in black, and veiled to the waist. Her pace was solemn and majestic, yet in every movement was a winning gracefulness. As she approached to the bar, I got a nearer view of her, when what was my astonishment to recognise in her the person of my favourite goddess, Melancholy. Amazed that she, whom I had always looked upon as the sister and companion of Wisdom, should be brought to trial as an emissary and an adherent to Folly, I waited in mute impatience for the accusation which could be framed against her.—On looking towards the centre of the area, I was much surprised to see a bustling little *Cit* of my acquaintance, who, by his hemming and clearing, I concluded was going to make the charge. As he was a self-important little fellow, full of consequence and business, and totally incapable of all the finer emotions of the soul, I could not conceive what ground of complaint he could have against Melancholy, who, I was persuaded, would never have deigned to take up her residence for a moment in his breast. When I recollected, however, that he had some sparks of ambition in his composition,

and that he was an envious, carping little mortal, who had formed the design of shouldering himself into notice by decrying the defects of others, while he was insensible to his own, my amazement and my apprehensions vanished, as I perceived he only wanted to make a display of his own talent, in doing which I did not fear his making himself sufficiently ridiculous.

After a good deal of irrelevant circumlocution, he boldly began the accusation of Melancholy. I shall not dwell upon many absurd and many invidious parts of his speech, nor upon the many blunders in the misapplication of words, such as "*deduce*" for "*detract*," and others of a similar nature, which my poor friend committed in the course of his harangue, but shall only dwell upon the material parts of the charge.

He represented the prisoner as the offspring of *Idleness* and *Discontent*, who was at all times a sulky, sullen, and "*eminently useless*" member of the community, and not unfrequently a very dangerous one. He declared it to be his opinion that, in case she were to be suffered to prevail, mankind would soon become "*too idle to go*," and would all lie down and perish through indolence, or through forgetting that sustenance was necessary for the preservation of existence; and concluded with painting the horrors which would attend such a depopulation of the earth, in such colours as made many weak minds regard the goddess with fear and abhorrence.

Having concluded, the accused was called upon for her defence. She immediately, with a graceful gesture, lifted up the veil which con-

cealed her face, and discovered a countenance so soft, so lovely, and so sweetly expressive, as to strike the beholders with involuntary admiration, and which, at one glance, overturned all the flimsy sophistry of my poor friend the citizen; and when the silver tones of her voice were heard, the murmurs, which until then had continually arisen from the crowd, were hushed to a dead still, and the whole multitude stood transfixed in breathless attention. As near as I can recollect, these were the words in which she addressed herself to the throne of wisdom:—

“ I shall not deign to give a direct answer to the various insinuations which have been thrown out against me by my accuser. Let it suffice, that I declare my true history, in opposition to that which has been so artfully fabricated to my disadvantage. In that early age of the world, when mankind followed the peaceful avocations of a pastoral life only, and contentment and harmony reigned in every vale, I was not known among men; but when, in process of time, Ambition and Vice, with their attendant evils, were sent down as a scourge to the human race, I made my appearance. I am the offspring of Misfortune and Virtue, and was sent by heaven to teach my parents how to support their afflictions with magnanimity. As I grew up, I became the intimate friend of the wisest among men. I was the bosom friend of Plato, and other illustrious sages of antiquity, and was then often known by the name of Philosophy, though, in present times, when that title is usurped by mere makers of experiments, and inventors of blacking-cakes, I am

only known by the appellation of Melancholy. So far from being of a discontented disposition, my very essence is pious and resigned contentment. I teach my votaries to support every vicissitude of fortune with calmness and fortitude. It is mine to subdue the stormy propensities of passion and vice, to foster and encourage the principles of benevolence and philanthropy, and to cherish and bring to perfection the seeds of virtue and wisdom. Though feared and hated by those who, like my accuser, are ignorant of my nature, I am courted and cherished by all the truly wise, the good, and the great; the poet woos me as the goddess of inspiration; the true philosopher acknowledges himself indebted to me for his most expansive views of human nature; the good man owes to me that hatred of the wrong and love of the right, and that disdain for the consequences which may result from the performance of his duties, which keeps him good; and the religious flies to me for the only clear and unencumbered view of the attributes and perfection of the Deity. So far from being idle, my mind is ever on the wing in the regions of fancy, or that true philosophy which opens the book of human nature, and raises the soul above the evils incident to life. If I am useless, in the same degree were Plato and Socrates, Locke and Paley, useless; it is true that my immediate influence is confined, but its effects are disseminated by means of literature over every age and nation; and mankind, in every generation, and in every clime, may look to me as their illuminator, the original spring of the principal intellectual benefits they

possess. But as there is no good without its attendant evil, so I have an elder sister, called Frenzy, for whom I have often been mistaken, who sometimes follows close on my steps, and to her I owe much of the obloquy which is attached to my name; though the puerile accusation which has been just brought against me turns on points which apply more exclusively to myself."

She ceased, and a dead pause ensued. The multitude seemed struck with the fascination of her utterance and gesture, and the sounds of her voice still seemed to vibrate on every ear. The attention of the assembly, however, was soon recalled to the accuser, and their indignation at his baseness rose to such a height as to threaten general tumult, when the Goddess of Wisdom arose, and, waving her hand for silence, beckoned the prisoner to her, placed her on her right hand, and with a sweet smile, acknowledged her for her old companion and friend. She then turned to the accuser, with a frown of severity so terrible, that I involuntarily started with terror from my poor misguided friend, and with the violence of the start I awoke, and, instead of the throne of the Goddess of Wisdom, and the vast assembly of people, beheld the first rays of the morning peeping over the eastern cloud; and, instead of the loud murmurs of the incensed multitude, heard nothing but the soft gurgling of the river at my feet, and the rustling wing of the skylark, who was now beginning his first matin song.

KIRKE WHITE.

ROSINE.

“WHY are you so grave, my love?” said Madame St. Alme.—“Rosine is the cause,” answered her husband.—“How have you displeased your father, Rosine?” Rosine did not speak, but she held down her head, and blushed deeply. “She has not displeased me,” said her father; “she has made me feel happy in the possession of such a daughter; but she has grieved me too, for she wishes to leave us, and accompany M. du Mercie to England, that she may become a governess there.”—“Come to me, my own best child,” said Madame St. Alme; “how can I part with you?”—Rosine flung herself on her mother’s bosom. “How can we all part with you?” she added, as the rest of the children pressed round their mother and sister. Rosine looked up into her mother’s face, and said, “I am the eldest, dearest mother, and there are so many of these dear brothers and sisters—so many to increase the expenses of my father: you have both educated me with such care, that I think I could teach; and you know I have been accustomed to do so at home. If you can trust me,” she said doubtingly, “so far from you, perhaps, I may be able to contribute to the support of some of these dear children.”

M. St. Alme was pastor of the village of Rossiniere, which is situated deep in the recesses of the mountains to the east of Lausanne. Rossiniere is one of those spots where the primitive simplicity and hospitality of the Swiss have remained still uncorrupted; the inhabitants still

welcome with delight the stranger to their cheerful hearths, and decidedly refuse to be paid for the accommodation they afford. The parsonage of Rossiniere had, for some centuries, belonged to the St. Alme family, who had long held nearly the first place in the heart of almost every inhabitant of the village: the pastor had, from time immemorial, been looked up to as their friend, and had been their consoler under all the afflictions of his grateful villagers. Strangers might have talked of the ancient family of St. Alme; but those who knew them talked only of their benevolence and piety.

The time drew near for Rosine's departure, and poor Rosine thought the time flew very swiftly: during the last week of her stay, another temptation nearly shook her resolution. She had felt a slight preference (to which she never allowed herself to give way) for her cousin, a young officer in the Prussian service, who had lately been residing with his mother at Rossiniere. When her intention to leave Switzerland was declared, he discovered that he was deeply attached to her, and he was unable to conceal his affection. Adrien had no fortune, and could offer her no inducement to remain; but as he parted from her, he could not resist declaring his sentiments: Rosine promised she would not forget him, and her manner proved that she *could* not.

The dreaded parting was over: without the power to weep, Rosine gazed at her family till she could see them no longer; she sat, lost in agonizing thought, till at last the one chord of

her heart was touched, and a gushing flood of tears relieved her.

As they passed a wood of beech trees, at a small distance from Rossiniere, Adrien sprang forward, waved his hand to her, and vanished instantly among the trees; he had waited there to see Rosine for the last time: her sad smile was never forgotten by him.

Rosine could not be insensible to the kindness of M. du Mercie, who was the very person best calculated to sooth her: he had also left Switzerland when young, and had been, during the chief part of his life, the minister of a Protestant church, in London; he was now leaving his country, he had reason to believe for the last time; for he was very old, and had taken leave, for the last time, of all his relations; he came over from England for that purpose, and was returning to die there.

During their journey, Rosine saw much to gratify her curiosity, but little to astonish her, till she was standing on the deck of the vessel which conveyed her to England. "This," said she to her venerable companion—"this wonderful ocean can be compared to our mountains. Here is one of the Creator's works unpolluted; these vast waters roll on as they did when God first divided them: man is ever taught his own insignificance here."—"Yes, Rosine," said the old clergyman, "and the dignity—the great value of his soul, is ever declared to him *here*; for this mighty ocean will pass away into nothing, while the invisible soul must live for ever. God seems to have ordained that some of the creations of his hand

shall be, as it were, for a season, images of his power: the ocean, the loftiest mountains may be compared to death—invincible death; neither are to be subdued by man; but they will be all finally swallowed up, while the soul can never die. Oh! if persons, who trifle with their souls, would remember, that the invisible spirit, which they neglect, as of no value, is superior to every visible object; that the heavens and the earth must be consumed, but that there is a day of judgment—no day of annihilation—for the soul!”

M. du Mercie had written to inquire for some situation which might suit Rosine; and, on her arrival, she proceeded immediately to the house of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley, who resided on their own estate, near the western coast of Sussex. They were delighted with her gentleness and simplicity, and even with the melancholy which would at times betray itself, notwithstanding all her efforts to become cheerful. She was happy, for she recollected a conversation which had passed between herself and M. du Mercie: he told her, that when he first left his own country he was very wretched; that he gave way to his feelings, and, after remaining a short time in England, returned to Switzerland; “but,” he added, “I was unhappy there, for my conscience continually reminded me that I was neglecting my duty, and refusing opportunities of being useful to my family; this remembrance embittered every pleasure: I went again to England, and, in all the sadness I have since felt, the delightful assurance that I was doing my duty has consoled me.”

Rosine was very successful in her exertions; she won the love and respect of all who knew her: with her little pupils she had the greatest influence; and by her patience, and the proved sweetness of her temper, she rendered them, daily, more aimable and obedient. With one of them, however, she wrought little apparent change: this girl had a violent temper; and Rosine found that often, when she had begun to hope that Miranda had obtained some command over herself, she broke forth again into fits of passion more violent than before; she would not bear to be jested with, and she continually found something to irritate her, where the offending person was totally unconscious of having offered an affront: never but once had she been angry with Rosine, and then she struck her.

One autumn evening, Rosine, to gratify her pupils, accompanied them to visit a poor person in the neighbouring village: she found, on her return, that a slight cold, which had hardly been perceived before, had increased. She remained at home for a few days, and was soon much better; still the cold seemed to linger. Mr. Stanley was absent about that time; but, on his return, the extreme paleness of Rosine alarmed him, and he noticed it to his wife; they both recommended her to have medical advice; but Rosine assured them that she was not so unwell as they imagined—that she could complain of nothing but the remains of her cold. One morning, however, after she had been teaching the children, she fainted away. Mrs. Stanley hesitated no longer, but instantly sent for a physician. Rosine was

ying down when Dr. Maynard arrived: after he had seen her, he went with Mrs. Stanley into one of the parlours, to write a prescription. Miranda was sitting in a room beyond that which they entered; the door was open, and, as it was just growing dark, she was not observed; she sat still, not wishing to disturb her mother by passing through the room. Miranda heard Mrs. Stanley talking, and she put her hands to her ears, for she disdained to listen; but she just heard Rosine's name, and danger, mentioned; and her hands dropped. She sat breathless and immoveable, while tears of agony streamed down her face. Long after Dr. Maynard's departure did she remain senseless, from grief, to every thing but what passed in her own mind, for he had declared Rosine was in a rapid consumption, and that her recovery was hopeless. At length, Miranda recollected herself, and, starting up, stole quickly, but softly, to Rosine's chamber: she tapped gently at the door, but the sick girl was asleep; she entered the room, and, creeping to the bedside, pressed the end of part of Rosine's dress to her lips. She sat down on the ground, behind the curtain, and, leaning her head against the bed, she continued weeping, till she fell, insensibly, into a sound sleep. Rosine, soon after, awoke; she drew aside the curtain to rise, and discovered the sleeping child—her cheeks stained with tears, and her bosom still heaving, slightly, with the storm of grief that had so lately subsided there. Rosine stooped down, and kissed her. "Can you ever love me?" said the poor girl, bursting again into tears (for she instantly

awoke), and kissing the extended hand of Rosine. "I have never ceased to love you, my sweet child," she replied, "nor have I ever doubted your affection for me; you have been hurried away by passion—you have forgotten yourself; but I understood your disposition, and I was sorry for you; I always loved you."—"Oh!" said Miranda, "I will try to be so good, you shall never complain of me again,—but my obedience will be too late," she exclaimed, while the hope, which had lighted up her countenance, faded away: "We shall lose you—I know we shall,—for they have told me so. But, no, no, you will not die—you look very healthy—you won't die?" she repeated, drawing still nearer to Rosine, and looking up, entreatingly, into her face.—"I do not understand you," said Rosine: "what—what have you heard, my love? Who told you I should die? Did Dr. Maynard tell you?" she inquired, anxiously.—"What *have* I done?" cried Miranda; "what *shall* I do? I can't answer—don't ask me."—Rosine attempted to detain her; but she rushed out of the room. Rosine rose up to shut the door after the agitated girl; she then locked it, and, sitting down near the fire, she thought over what Miranda had told her. "Yes," she said at last, "I shall die; she has told me what I ought to know; all my dearest earthly hopes are over. I shall never return home again; I feel I shall die. Oh, my dear, dear parents; my own Sophie; my sweet children; this is a very severe trial; we have parted for the last time. Poor Adrien," she added, "I little thought I should never see you again! But

this will not do," said she, ceasing to weep; "I am weakening my mind—I am not preparing properly for death. I must seek strength."—Rosine did receive strength from her prayers, and such consolation as nothing but prayer could have supplied after such a shock. Was it not a severe shock for one, in the very morn of youth, to be told, in such a manner, that she was dying? for one, who was alone among strangers, in a strange country?—"It is not the fear of death alone," she thought, "that so depresses me, although I am very young to die; but it is dying far away from my own country, my own beloved family."

Miranda had run into the room where her parents were sitting; she threw herself into her mother's arms and sobbed aloud: "Oh! I shall never, never forgive myself," she said; "I have told M. St. Alme what Dr. Maynard said to you to-day; I have told her she could not live." Miranda explained how she had heard the conversation she alluded to; and again sobbed. There was an old lady present, the mother of Mrs. Stanley: she was nearly eighty years of age, but the faculties of her mind were perfectly unimpaired. Her husband, Lord Falkland, had been many years dead; and she had since then resided with her daughter. Lady Falkland was much attached to Rosine; who had long valued her more than any of her English friends. "Miranda spoke imprudently," she quietly said; "but it was quite right that our young friend should be acquainted with her situation. I will go up to her, if Miranda will let me lean on her arm."—

"I am come to sit with you," said the old lady, as she entered Rosine's chamber. "You will forgive this thoughtless girl, who loves you very tenderly." She drew forward the blushing downcast Miranda, whom Rosine pressed fondly to her bosom, and kissed repeatedly." The sad girl looked up with a mournful affectionate smile, and left the room.

"You have been told the truth, my sweet friend," said she. "You and I are hastening together, I hope, to a better world. It is proper that we should know our situation: let us strive to fit each other for a happier state, by making the most of the time which is left to us. I could not speak to another young woman as I do to you: but I think I know you, my love: another might find no consolation in the advice of an old woman, who is tottering to the grave. I think you are prepared for death; and I think the certainty of that, which may be as near others as it is at present near you, only they are unconscious of it, will not fill you with foolish alarms. Your heavenly Father is treating you as a child of his love, in giving you a trial, such as I never met with in my long life—this parting here, for ever, with those you love best on earth: he is treating you as a child of his love also, in taking you to himself, while you are as yet comparatively undefiled by the world. It was thus, from motives of pure mercy, that he has removed so many others like yourself; that he has transplanted the flower bursting from the bud to blossom in a more genial soil. While Lady Falkland was speaking, Rosine's countenance

had brightened with a delight she had never before experienced ; her silence was more eloquent than words, when her friend had finished speaking ; for some time after, at night, or whenever she awoke from her broken slumbers, the recollection that she was dying made Rosine melancholy ; but as the novelty of this very mournful feeling wore away, she became perfectly resigned and cheerful. Every attention that her situation could require was devoted to the dying girl : but on none did she set such a value as on those hours passed daily with Lady Falkland. Miranda, too, whenever she was permitted, would visit the chamber of her beloved instructress ; and be perfectly satisfied if she might sit near her, and look at her. The character of this child seemed to have entirely changed : she was meek and tractable ; the wild exuberant gaiety, which had distinguished her equally with the violence of her temper, when Rosine was well, had now, upon the sudden decline of her health, subsided ; she was never animated with joy, but when declaring her conviction that Rosine would not die, " because she appeared too healthy to die." The child, however, became at last alarmed ; for she remarked that Rosine was at times agitated so violently, that her whole frame seemed shaken ; while the deathlike paleness of her countenance was flushed with deep and burning blushes : from the mere exertion of crossing the room she would often faint away ; and her fits would last so long, that it often seemed as if she would never recover from them. Rosine had entreated, at the commencement of her illness, that no one would write

to her family ; she knew that none of them could well visit her ; it was impossible for her to go to them. " Let me, then," said she, " write to them myself ; it is a poor satisfaction, but it is the last I can have : I wish to tell them, in my own way, that I am dying." Her wishes were at first opposed, but she repeated them so earnestly, and her reasons seemed so irresistible, that she was allowed to act as she chose on the subject. Her mind was too confused and depressed at first, to enable her to write as she determined ; she waited therefore a short time ; but she could not quite (in her own opinion) prepare herself for the task when she endeavoured to resume it. " I must delay no longer," she said to herself one morning, " or I may never send these letters." At length she wrote thus to her father :—

" When first I thought of writing to you, my very dear father, I knew not how I could set about it, I was so uneasy at the idea ; but I have requested that I may write to you myself, and I am now quite calm and cheerful ; more so than I have ever been ; though it is a very different calmness and cheerfulness from what I have ever experienced before ; you must often have witnessed it, my dear father, among those whose deathbeds you have attended.—I am very ill, that is, I am very weak and languid, though I feel hardly any pain, yet I feel that I am dying ! —and before you receive this letter, I shall probably be freed from this infirm body. Need I say to one, who can seek and find ' a very present help in time of trouble,' that, I am assured, you will all bear this affliction as you have ever borne

the trials of the Almighty? I am not sorry for myself; but for those dear friends who will lament me. Do not let any one, my dear father, give way to excessive grief; bid them, at least, to check their sorrow, by telling them it was my last request. I am so resigned to death, that I would not wish to live now; my soul seems already to have begun its last journey; all the pain of leaving this world is over; it would not return again, without regret; for (I speak as a humble sinner) it seems already exalted and purified;—every one is so kind to me here; I almost feel as if you were all with me. Lady Falkland has, in a manner, supplied the place of my dear father; she joins with me daily in prayer and thanksgiving. I have often spoken to you about her: she calls herself my fellow traveller in this last journey. My dear, dear father, let me conjure you not to come to England; I shall be miserable if you do. Pray stay and comfort my mother and Sophie, and all my dear brothers and sisters. Without you, what would they all do? what would all the village do without you? besides, who is there that would, who is there that could, do *your* duty in your absence? If you will grant your Rosine's last request, and make her quite, yes, quite happy, you will stay and pray for me at your own church. M. du Mercie will remit you ten guineas, to be given among the poor villagers; you are the best judge, dear father, of the worthiest objects; but pray remember my poor old widow. I am sorry that I cannot send any money, *as I meant to send it*; but I am afraid my illness and my funeral will con-

sume the little I have left ; it was proper to say this ; it appears a little dismal : but all that concerns the body in death seems mournful : all that concerns the soul seems, *to me*, very joyful. —Tell dear Sophie, if she wishes to know my favourite spot, it is that part of the mountain, about our cottage, which we used to name ‘our thinking retreat.’ When quite alone, I always sat down at the foot of the two weeping birches there. I was very fond, too, of a bed of gentians, which I had almost cultivated (for I had transplanted many roots to that spot) near those trees. This is very fanciful ; but I think it will please Sophie to know exactly my most favourite haunt ; it would have pleased me, had she been destined to send such a message to me. Tell her I name the spot ‘The home of memory.’ My dearest father, my dearest mother, I thank you from my soul for your affection and care, which has never failed : and I thank dearest Sophie, and all my beloved brothers and sisters. I think of every body whom I love :—I pray for them,—I cannot write any more ; I am a little fatigued now. On my knees I implore God to bless you all. We shall soon meet again.—Be assured that I am quite happy. ROSINE ST. ALME.”

“The mercy and goodness of the Lord never faileth ; in him have I put my trust ; he will wipe the tears from off all eyes. Glory be to God.”

Rosine enclosed a few lines to her cousin Adrien, in the letter to her father. She thanked him for his affection, and told him, that the best proof of

it, after her death, would be to wrestle against immoderate grief. She concluded in these words : “ I would not, my dear Adrien, have the false pride of denying that I would have chosen you for my husband, rather than any one I knew. While I live I shall be sensible of your love, and grateful, truly grateful, for it. Nor would I have the false shame of concealing one sentiment of my heart from you at this time. Prove, my dear friend, that affection for me has not weakened your mind ; and bear, like the child of God, the afflictions of our heavenly Father. I could have been so happy with you ! but must I wish to choose between the state to which it pleases God to remove me, and this world’s best happiness, when we meet, also, never to be separated in heaven ?—In my prayers you have never been forgotten : I can never forget you, my dearest Adrien. The love of soul will not, surely, be changed by death. Ever watch and pray then (partly for my sake) ‘ that you may pass through things temporal, so that you lose not things eternal.’ The pain of parting, death’s worst pain, is over ;—rejoice with me, my beloved—yes, I may now say, beloved husband.”

M. du Mercie arrived at the house of Mr. Stanley the day Rosine finished the above letters. He forwarded them immediately ; writing, at the same time, himself to M. St. Alme.

Rosine became gradually weaker : death made every day some visible advance ; but its effect on her mind was like that of the summer’s sun on the snows of Siberia ; the dazzling surface was vanishing, but flowers, already budding into

colour and beauty, appeared amid the bright verdure beneath. She had seemed a simple girl before : her character now seemed exalted ;—she had been loved (and respected too) before ; she was now looked up to as a superior creature. All her actions had something unearthly in them ; her conversation displayed the same humble spirit ; but she spake almost as one inspired. All the gentle virtues of Christianity were more gentle and lovely, and the passions of the world seemed spiritualized in her. She seemed like one who is about to take a journey, and had arranged every thing for his departure : she was anxious for nothing, she waited for nothing, but death ; and death came at last very gently, as if it looked upon her with affection, and feared to disturb her. She had just received the sacrament with Lady Falkland : M. du Mercie was still with her, and Miranda was seated near the couch where she was lying ; the hand of the quiet child was clasped in hers, and her head was reclining on a pillow. Lady Falkland was gazing at her lovely countenance, and fearful even to stir ; for Rosine's eyes were closed (she supposed) in slumber. Miranda felt her hand more fondly pressed for an instant.—Lady Falkland beheld an expression of angelic rapture beam over the countenance before her.—The hand dropped—the face was calm again—something had vanished there—the soul had fled.

ANONYMOUS.

THE DANGER OF INDULGENCE OF THE IMAGINATION.

METHOUGHT, as I was sitting at work, a young woman came into the room, clothed in a loose green garment: her long hair fell in ringlets upon her shoulders: her head was crowned with roses and myrtles: a prodigious sweetness appeared in her countenance; and notwithstanding the irregularity of her features, and a certain wildness in her eyes, she seemed to me the most agreeable person I had ever beheld.

When she was entered, she presented me with a little green branch, upon which was a small sort of nut, enclosed in a hard black shell, which, she said, was both wholesome and delicious; and bade me follow her, and be not afraid, for she was going to make me happy.

I did as she commanded me, and immediately a chariot descended, and took us up: it was made of the richest materials, and drawn by four milkwhite turtles. Whilst we were hurried, with a rapid motion, over vast oceans, boundless plains, and barren deserts, she told me that her name was Imagination; that she was carrying me to Parnassus, where she herself lived.

I had scarce time to thank her before we arrived at the top of a very high mountain, covered with very thick woods. Here we alighted; and my guide taking me by the hand, we passed through several beautiful groves of myrtle, bays, and laurel, separated from one another by little green alleys, enamelled with the finest

flowers. Nothing was to be heard but the rustling of leaves, the humming of bees, the warbling of birds, and the purling of streams; and, in short, this spot seemed to be a paradise.

After wandering some time in this delightful place, we came to a long grass walk, at the farther end of which, in a bower of woodbines and jasmines, strewed with flowers, sat a woman of a middle age, but of a pleasing countenance: her hair was finely braided, and she wore a habit of changeable silk.

When we approached her, she was weaving nets of the finest silk, which she immediately threw down, and embraced me. I was surprised at so much civility from a stranger, which she perceiving, bade me not wonder at the kindness she showed for me at first sight, since, besides my being in the company of that lady (pointing to Imagination) which was recommendation enough, my own person would entitle me to the favour of all who saw me. "But," added she, "you have had a long walk, and want rest, come and sit down in my bower."

Though this offer would, at another time, have been very acceptable to me, yet so great was my desire of seeing the Muses, that I begged to be excused, and to have permission to pursue my journey. Being informed by Imagination where we were going, she commended my laudable curiosity, and said she would accompany us. As we went along, she told me her name was Good Will, and she was a great friend to the Muses, and to the lady who brought me hither, whom she had brought up from a child, and had saved her from

being carried away by Severity and Ill Humour, her inveterate enemies.

When she had done speaking, we arrived at the happy place I had so much wished to see. It was a little circular opening, at the upper end of which sat, on a throne of the most fragrant flowers, a young man in a flame coloured garment, of a noble but haughty countenance: he was crowned with laurel, and had a harp in his hand. Round him sat nine beautiful young women, who all played upon musical instruments. These, Imagination told me were Apollo and the Muses. But, above all the rest, there were three that I most admired, and who seemed fondest of me.

One of these was clothed in a loose and careless manner; she was reposed on a bank of flowers, and sang with a sweeter voice than any of the others. The garment of the second was put on with the greatest care and exactness, and richly embroidered with the gayest colours; but it did not seem to fit her. But it was the third whom I most admired: she was crowned with roses and a variety of other flowers; she played upon all the instruments, and never stayed five minutes in a place.

Just as I was going to sit down to a fine repast which they had prepared for me, of the fruits of the mountain, we saw two grave looking men advancing towards us. Immediately Imagination shrieked out, and Good Will said she had great reason, for these were Severity and Ill Humour, who had like to have run away with her when but a child, as she had told me before. "You

too," added she, " may be in danger ; therefore come into the midst of us."

I did so, and by this time the men were come up. One of them was completely armed, and held a mirror in his hand ; the other wore a long robe, and held in one hand a mariner's compass, and in the other a lantern. They soon pierced to the centre of our little troop ; and the first, with much ado, at length forced me from the only two who still held out against them, and made me hearken to the other, who bade me not be afraid, and told me, though I might be prejudiced against him and his companion by those I had lately been with, yet they had a greater desire of my happiness, and would do more towards it. " But," said he, " if you have eaten any of the fruit which you have in your hand, of which the real name is Obstinacy, all I can say will be ineffectual."

I assured him that I had not tasted this fatal fruit. He said he was very glad of it, and bade me throw it down and follow him ; which I did, till by a shorter way we came to the brow of the mountain. When we were there, he told me the only way to deliver myself from the danger I was then in, was to leap down into the plain below. As the mountain seemed very steep, and the plain very barren, I could neither persuade myself to obey, nor had I courage to disobey him.

I thus stood wavering for some time, till the man in armour pushed me down, as Mentor did Telemachus. When I was recovered from the first shock of my fall, how great was my surprise to find this paradise of the world, this delightful

mountain, was raised to that prodigious height by mere empty clouds!

After they had given me some time to wonder, he who held the lantern in his hand told me that the place before me was the Mount of Folly: that Imagination was Romance, Good Will was Flattery, Apollo was Bombast: that the two false Muses, who tried most to keep me from coming with them, were Self Conceit and Idleness; that the others were Inconstancy, False Taste, Ignorance, and Affectation, her daughters; Enthusiasm of Poetry; Credulity, a great promoter of their despotic dominion; and Fantasticalness, who took as many hearts as any of the rest.

I thanked him for this information, and told him that it would almost equal the joy of my deliverance, to know the names of my deliverers. He told me his own name was Good Advice, and his companion's Good Sense, his brother, and born at the same time. He added, that, if I liked their company, they would, after having shown me the many thousand wretches whom my false friends had betrayed, conduct me to the abode of Application and Preseverance, the parents of all the Virtues.

I told him that nothing could afford me a more sensible pleasure. "Then," said he, "prepare yourself for a scene of horror;" and immediately, with the help of his brother, he lifted up the mountain, and discovered to my sight a dark and hollow vale, where, under the shade of cypress and yew, lay, in the utmost misery, multitudes of unhappy mortals, mostly young women, run

away with by Romance. When I had left this dreadful spot, and the mountain was closed upon them, just as I was going to be good and happy, some unhappy incident awakened me.

MISS TALBOT.

ASEM ;

OR, THE WISDOM OF PROVIDENCE IN THE MORAL
GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD,

An Eastern Tale.

WHERE Taurus lifts its head above the storm, and presents nothing to the sight of the distant traveller but a prospect of nodding rocks, falling torrents, and all the variety of tremendous nature ; on the bleak bosom of this frightful mountain, secluded from society, and detesting the ways of men, lived Asem the man hater.

Asem had spent his youth with men ; had shared in their amusements ; and had been taught to love his fellow creatures with the most ardent affection : but, from the tenderness of his disposition, he exhausted all his fortune in relieving the wants of the distressed. The petitioner never sued in vain ; the weary traveller never passed his door ; he only desisted from doing good when he had no longer the power of relieving.

From a fortune thus spent in benevolence, he expected a grateful return from those he had formerly relieved ; and made his application with confidence of redress : the ungrateful world soon grew weary of his importunity ; for pity is but a

shortlived passion. He soon, therefore, began to view mankind in a very different light from that in which he had before beheld them: he perceived a thousand vices he had never before suspected to exist: wherever he turned, ingratitude, dissimulation, and treachery, contributed to increase his detestation of them. Resolved, therefore, to continue no longer in a world which he hated, and which repaid his detestation with contempt, he retired to this region of sterility, in order to brood over his resentment in solitude, and converse with the only heart he knew; namely, with his own.

A cave was his only shelter from the inclemency of the weather; fruits gathered with difficulty from the mountain's side, his only food; and his drink was fetched with danger and toil from the headlong torrent. In this manner he lived, sequestered from society, passing the hours in meditation, and sometimes exulting that he was able to live independently of his fellow creatures.

At the foot of the mountain an extensive lake displayed its glassy bosom, reflecting on its broad surface the impending horrors of the mountain. To this capacious mirror he would sometimes descend, and, reclining on its steep banks, cast an eager look on the smooth expanse that lay before him. "How beautiful," he often cried, "is nature! how lovely, even in her wildest scenes! How finely contrasted is the level plain that lies beneath me, with yon awful pile that hides its tremendous head in clouds! But the beauty of these scenes is no way comparable with their utility; from hence a hundred rivers are

supplied, which distribute health and verdure to the various countries through which they flow. Every part of the universe is beautiful, just, and wise, but man : vile man is a solecism in nature ; the only monster in creation. Tempests and whirlwinds have their use ; but vicious, ungrateful man is a blot in the fair page of universal beauty. Why was I born of that detested species, whose vices are almost a reproach to the wisdom of the Divine Creator ? Were men entirely free from vice, all would be uniformity, harmony, and order. A world of moral rectitude should be the result of a perfectly moral agent. Why, why then, O Allah ! must I be thus confined in darkness, doubt, and despair ?”

Just as he uttered the word despair, he was going to plunge into the lake beneath him, at once to satisfy his doubts, and put a period to his anxiety ; when he perceived a most majestic being walking on the surface of the water, and approaching the bank on which he stood. So unexpected an object at once checked his purpose ; he stopped, contemplated, and fancied he saw something awful and divine in his aspect.

“ Son of Adam,” cried the genius, “ stop thy rash purpose ; the Father of the faithful has seen thy justice, thy integrity, thy miseries ; and hath sent me to afford and administer relief. Give me thine hand, and follow, without trembling, wherever I shall lead ; in me behold the Genius of Conviction, kept by the great prophet, to turn from their errors those who go astray, not from curiosity, but a rectitude of intention. Follow me, and be wise.”

Asem immediately descended upon the lake, and his guide conducted him along the surface of the water; till, coming near the centre of the lake, they both began to sink; the waters closed over their heads; they descended several hundred fathoms, till Asem, just ready to give up his life as inevitably lost, found himself with his celestial guide in another world, at the bottom of the waters, where human foot had never trod before. His astonishment was beyond description, when he saw a sun like that which he had left, a serene sky over his head, and blooming verdure under his feet.

"I plainly perceive your amazement," said the genius, "but suspend it for a while. This world was formed by Alla, at the request, and under the inspection, of our great prophet, who once entertained the same doubts which filled your mind when I found you, and from the consequence of which you were so lately rescued. The rational inhabitants of this world are formed agreeably to your own ideas; they are absolutely without vice. In other respects it resembles your earth; but differs from it in being wholly inhabited by men who never do wrong. If you find this world more agreeable than that you so lately left, you have free permission to spend the remainder of your days in it; but permit me, for some time, to attend you, that I may silence your doubts, and make you better acquainted with your company, and your new habitation."

"A world without vice! Rational beings without immorality!" cried Asem in a rapture, "I

thank thee, O Alla ! who hast at length heard my petitions ; this, this indeed, will produce happiness, ecstasy, and ease. O for an immortality to spend it among men who are incapable of ingratitude, injustice, fraud, violence, and a thousand other crimes that render society miserable !”

“ Cease thine acclamations !” replied the genius. “ Look around thee ; reflect on every object and action before us, and communicate to me the result of thine observations. Lead wherever you think proper, I shall be your attendant and instructor.”

Asem and his companion travelled on in silence for some time, the former being entirely lost in astonishment ; but, at last, recovering his former serenity, he could not help observing that the face of the country bore a near resemblance to that he had left, except that this subterranean world still seemed to retain its primæval wildness.

“ Here,” cried Asem, “ I perceive animals of prey, and others that seem only designed for their subsistence ; it is the very same in the world over our heads. But had I been permitted to instruct our prophet, I would have removed this defect, and formed no voracious or destructive animals, which only prey on the other parts of the creation.” “ Your tenderness for inferior animals is, I find, remarkable,” said the genius, smiling. “ But, with regard to meaner creatures, this world exactly resembles the other ; and, indeed, for obvious reasons : for the earth can support a more considerable number of ani-

mals, by their thus becoming food for each other, than if they had lived entirely on her vegetable productions. So that animals of different natures thus formed, instead of lessening their multitude, subsist in the greatest number possible. But let us hasten on to the inhabited country before us, and see what offers for instruction."

They soon gained the utmost verge of the forest, and entered the country inhabited by men without vice; and Asem anticipated in idea the rational delight he hoped to experience in such innocent society. But they had scarce left the confines of the wood, when they beheld one of the inhabitants flying with hasty steps, and terror in his countenance, from an army of squirrels that closely pursued him. "Heavens!" cried Asem, "why does he fly? What can he fear from animals so contemptible?" He had scarce spoken, when he perceived two dogs pursuing another of the human species, who, with equal terror and haste, attempted to avoid them. "This," cried Asem to his guide, "is truly surprising; nor can I conceive the reason for so strange an action."—"Every species of animals," replied the genius, "has of late grown very powerful in this country; for the inhabitants, at first, thinking it unjust to use either fraud or force in destroying them, they have insensibly increased, and now frequently ravage their harmless frontiers."—"But they should have been destroyed," cried Asem; "you see the consequences of such neglect."—"Where is then that tenderness you so lately expressed for subordinate animals?" replied the genius, smiling: "you seem to have forgotten that branch of justice."—"I must

acknowledge my mistake," returned Asem; "I am now convinced that we must be guilty of tyranny and injustice to the brute creation, if we would enjoy the world ourselves. But let us no longer observe the duty of man to these irrational creatures, but survey their connexions with one another."

As they walked farther up the country, the more he was surprised to see no vestiges of handsome houses, no cities, nor any mark of elegant design. His conductor, perceiving his surprise, observed that the inhabitants of this new world were perfectly content with their ancient simplicity; each had a house, which, though homely, was sufficient to lodge his little family; they were too good to build houses which could only increase their own pride, and the envy of the spectator; what they built was for convenience, and not for show. "At least then," said Asem, "they have neither architects, painters, nor statuaries in this society; but these are idle arts, and may be spared. However, before I spend much more time here, you should have my thanks for introducing me into the society of some of their wisest men: there is scarce any pleasure to me equal to a refined conversation; there is nothing of which I am so much enamoured as wisdom."—"Wisdom!" replied his instructor, "how ridiculous! We have no wisdom here, for we have no occasion for it; true wisdom is only a knowledge of our own duty, and the duty of others to us; but of what use is such wisdom here? Each intuitively performs what is right himself, and expects the same from others. If by wisdom you should mean vain curiosity, and

empty speculation, as such pleasures have their origin in vanity, luxury, or avarice, we are too good to pursue them."—"All this may be right," says Asem, "but methinks I observe a solitary disposition prevail among the people; each family keeps separately within their own precincts, without society, or without intercourse."—"That, indeed, is true," replied the other, "here is no established society, nor should there be any: all societies are made either through fear or friendship; the people we are among are too good to fear each other; and there are no motives to private friendship, where all are equally meritorious."—"Well then," said the sceptic, "as I am to spend my time here, if I am to have neither the polite arts, nor wisdom, nor friendship, in such a world, I shall be glad, at least, of an easy companion, who may tell me his thoughts, and to whom I may communicate mine."—"And to what purpose should either do this?" says the genius: "flattery or curiosity are vicious motives, and never allowed of here; and wisdom is out of the question."

"Still, however," said Asem, "the inhabitants must be happy; each is contented with his own possessions, nor avariciously endeavours to heap up more than is necessary for his own subsistence; each has therefore leisure for pitying those that stand in need of his compassion." He had scarce spoken when his ears were assaulted with the lamentations of a wretch who sat by the way side, and, in the most deplorable distress, seemed gently to murmur at his own misery. Asem immediately ran to his relief, and found him in the last stage of a consumption. "Strange,"

cried the son of Adam, "that men who are free from vice should thus suffer so much misery without relief!"—"Be not surprised," said the wretch who was dying; "would it not be the utmost injustice for beings, who have only just sufficient to support themselves, and are content with a bare subsistence, to take it from their own mouths to put it into mine? They never are possessed of a single meal more than is necessary; and what is barely necessary cannot be dispensed with."—"They should have been supplied with more than is necessary," cried Asem; "and yet I contradict my own opinion but a moment before: all is doubt, perplexity, and confusion. Even the want of ingratitude is no virtue here, since they never received a favour. They have, however, another excellence yet behind; the love of their country is still, I hope, one of their darling virtues."—"Peace, Asem," replied the guardian, with a countenance not less severe than beautiful, "nor forfeit all thy pretensions to wisdom; the same selfish motives by which we prefer our own interest to that of others, induces us to regard our country preferable to that of another. Nothing less than universal benevolence is free from vice, and that you see is practised here."—"Strange," cries the disappointed pilgrim, in an agony of distress, "what sort of a world am I now introduced to? There is scarce a single virtue, but that of temperance, which they practise; and in that they are no way superior to the brute creation. There is scarce an amusement which they enjoy; fortitude, liberality, friendship, wisdom, conversation, and love of country, all are virtues entirely unknown here; thus it seems, that to be

unacquainted with vice is not to know virtue. Take me, O my genius, back to that very world which I have despised : a world which has Alla for its contriver is much more wisely formed than that which has been projected by Mahomet. Ingratitude, contempt, and hatred, I can now suffer, for perhaps I have deserved them. When I arraigned the wisdom of Providence I only showed my own ignorance ; henceforth let me keep from vice myself, and pity it in others."

He had scarce ended, when the genius, assuming an air of terrible complacency, called all his thunders around him, and vanished in a whirlwind. Asem, astonished at the terror of the scene, looked for his imaginary world. When, casting his eyes around, he perceived himself in the very situation, and in the very place, where he first began to repine and despair ; his right foot had been just advanced to take the fatal plunge, nor had it been yet withdrawn ; so instantly did Providence strike the series of truths just imprinted on his soul. He now departed from the water side in tranquillity, and, leaving his horrid mansion, travelled to Segestan, his native city ; where he diligently applied himself to commerce, and put in practice that wisdom which he had learned in solitude. The frugality of a few years soon produced opulence ; the number of his domestics increased ; his friends came to him from every part of the city, nor did he receive them with disdain ; and a youth of misery was concluded with an old age of elegance, affluence, and ease.

GOLDSMITH.

CHAUBERT THE MISANTHROPE.

AMONGST the variety of human events which come under the observation of every man of common experience in life, many instances must occur to his memory of the false opinions he had formed of good and evil fortune. Things which we lament as the most unhappy occurrences and the severest dispensations of Providence frequently turn out to have been vouchsafements of a contrary sort; whilst our prosperity and success, which for a time delight and dazzle us with the gleams of pleasure and visions of ambition, turn against us in the end of life, and sow the bed of death with thorns, that goad us in those awful moments when the vanities of this world lose their value, and the mind of man being on its last departure, takes a melancholy review of time mispent and blessings misapplied.

Though it is part of every good man's religion to resign himself to God's will, yet a few reflections upon the worldly wisdom of that duty will be of use to every one who falls under the immediate pressure of what is termed misfortune in life. By calling to mind the false estimates we have frequently made of worldly good and evil, we shall get hope on our side, which, though all friends else should fail us, will be a cheerful companion by the way. By a patient acquiescence under painful events for the present, we shall be sure to contract a tranquillity of temper that will stand us in future stead; and, by keeping a fair face to the world, we shall, by degrees, make an easy heart, and find innumerable re-

sources of consolation which a fretful spirit never can discover.

"I wonder why I was so uneasy under my late loss of fortune," said a very worthy gentleman to me one day, "seeing it was not occasioned by my own misconduct; for the health and content I now enjoy, in the humble station I have retired to, are the greatest blessings of my life, and I am devoutly thankful for the event which I deplored." How often do we hear young unmarried people exclaim—*What an escape have I had from such a man, or such a woman.* And yet, perhaps, they had not wisdom enough to suppose this might turn out to be the case at the time it happened, but complained, lamented, and reviled, as if they were suffering persecution from a cruel and tyrannic Being, who takes pleasure in tormenting his unoffending creatures.

An extraordinary example occurs to me of this criminal excess of sensibility in the person of a Frenchman named Chaubert, who happily lived long enough to repent of the extravagance of his misanthropy. Chaubert was born at Bordeaux, and died there not many years ago in the Franciscan convent; I was in that city soon after this event, and my curiosity led me to collect several particulars relative to this extraordinary humorist. He inherits a good fortune from his parents, and in his youth was of a benevolent disposition, subject however to sudden caprices and extremes of love and hatred. Various causes are assigned for his misanthropy; but the principle disgust, which turned him furious against mankind, seems to have arisen from the treachery of a friend, who

ran away with his mistress, just when Chaubert was on the point of marrying her; the ingratitude of this man was certainly of a very black nature, and the provocation heinous, for Chaubert, whose passions were always in extremes, had given a thousand instances of romantic generosity to this unworthy friend, and reposed an entire confidence in him in the matter of his mistress: he had even saved him from drowning one day at the imminent risk of his life, by leaping out of his own boat into the Garonne, and swimming to the assistance of his, when it was sinking in the middle of the stream. His passion for his mistress was no less vehement; so that his disappointment had every aggravation possible, and operating upon a nature more than commonly susceptible, reversed every principle of humanity in the heart of Chaubert, and made him for the greatest part of his life the declared enemy of human nature.

After many years passed in foreign parts, he was accidentally brought to his better senses by discovering that through these events, which he had so deeply resented, he had providentially escaped from miseries of the most fatal nature: thereupon he returned to his own country, and entering into the order of Franciscans, employed the remainder of his life in atoning for his past errors after the most exemplary manner. On all occasions of distress Father Chaubert's zeal presented itself to the relief and comfort of the unfortunate, and sometimes he would enforce his admonitions of resignation by the lively picture he would draw of his own extravagancies; in

extraordinary cases he has been known to give his communicants a transcript or diary, in his own hand writing, of certain passages of his life, in which he had minuted his thoughts at the time they occurred, and which he kept by him for such extraordinary purposes. This paper was put into my hands by a gentleman who had received much benefit from this good father's conversation and instruction; I had his leave for transcribing it, or publishing, if I thought fit; this I shall now avail myself of, as I think it is a very curious journal.

" My son, whoever thou art, profit by the word of experience, and let the example of Chaubert, who was a beast without reason, and is become a man by repentance, teach thee wisdom in adversity, and inspire thy heart with sentiments of resignation to the will of the Almighty!

" When the treachery of people, which I ought to have despised, had turned my heart to marble and my blood to gall, I was determined upon leaving France, and seeking out some of those countries from whose famished inhabitants nature withholds her bounty, and where men groan in slavery and sorrow. As I passed through the villages towards the frontiers of Spain, and saw the peasants dancing in a ring to the pipe, or carousing at their vintages, indignation smote my heart, and I wished that heaven would dash their cups with poison, or blast the sunshine of their joys with hail and tempest.

" I traversed the delightful province of Biscay, without rest to the soles of my feet or sleep to the

temples of my head. Nature was before my eyes dressed in her gayest attire :—‘ Thou mother of fools,’ I exclaimed, ‘ why dost thou trick thyself out so daintily for knaves and harlots to make a property of thee ? The children of thy womb are vipers in thy bosom, and will sting thee mortally when thou hast given them their fill at thy improvident breasts.’ The birds chanted in the groves, the fruit trees glistened on the mountain sides, the waterfalls made music for the echoes, and man went singing to his labour :—‘ Give me,’ said I, ‘ the clank of fetters, and the yell of galley slaves, under the lashes of the whip.’—And in the bitterness of my heart I cursed the earth as I trod over its prolific surface.

“ I entered the ancient kingdom of Castile, and the prospect was a recreation to my sorrow-vexed soul : I saw the lands lie waste and fallow ; the vines trailed on the ground and buried their fruitage in the furrows ; the hand of man was idle, and nature slept as in the cradle of creation ; the villages were thinly scattered, and ruin sat upon the unroofed sheds, where lazy pride lay stretched upon its straw in beggary and vermin. *Ah ! this is something*, I cried out, *this scene is fit for man, and I'll enjoy it.*—I saw a yellow half starved form, cloaked to the heels in rags, his broad brimmed beaver on his head, through which his staring locks crept out in squalid shreds, that fell like snakes upon the shoulders of a fiend.—‘ Such ever be the fate of human nature ! I'll aggravate his misery by the insult of charity. Hark ye, Castilian,’ I exclaimed, ‘ take this pisette ; it is coin, it is silver from the mint of

Mexico ; a Spaniard dug it from the mine, a Frenchman gives it you ; put by your pride and touch it !'—' Cursed be your nation,' the Castilian replied, ' I'll starve before I'll take it from your hands.'—' Starve then,' I answered, and passed on.

" I climbed a barren mountain ; the wolves howled in the desert, and the vultures screamed in flocks for prey ; I looked and beheld a gloomy mansion underneath my feet, vast as the pride of its founder, gloomy and disconsolate as his-soul : it was the Escorial.—' Here then the tyrant reigns,' said I, ' here let him reign ; hard as these rocks his throne, waste as these deserts be his dominion !' A meagre creature passed me ; famine stared in his eye, he cast a look about him, and sprung upon a kid that was browsing in the desert, he smote it dead with his staff, and hastily thrust it into his wallet.—' Ah, sacrilegious villain !'—cried a brawny fellow ; and, leaping on him from behind a rock, seized the hungry wretch in the act ; he dropped upon his knees and begged for mercy.—' Mercy !' cried he that seized him, ' do you purloin the property of the church, and ask for mercy ?'—So saying, he beat him to the earth with a blow, as he was kneeling at his feet, and then dragged him towards the convent of St. Lawrence ; I could have hugged the miscreant for the deed.

" I held my journey through the desert, and desolation followed me to the very streets of Madrid ; the fathers of the Inquisition came forth from the cells of torture ; the cross was elevated before them, and a trembling wretch, in a saffron-

coloured vest, painted with flames of fire, was dragged to execution in an open square; they kindled a fire about him, and sang praises to God, whilst the flames deliberately consumed their human victim. He was a Jew who suffered, they were Christians who tormented.—‘ See what the religion of God is,’ said I to myself, ‘ in the hands of man!’

“ From the gates of Madrid I bent my course towards the port of Lisbon; as I traversed the wilderness of Estremadura, a robber took his aim at me from behind a cork tree, and the ball grazed my hat upon my head.—‘ You have missed your aim,’ I cried, ‘ and have lost the merit of destroying a man.’—‘ Give me your purse,’ said the robber.—‘ Take it,’ I replied, ‘ and buy with it a friend; may it serve you as it has served me!’

“ I found the city of Lisbon in ruins; her foundations smoked upon the ground; the dying and the dead laid in heaps; terror sat in every visage, and mankind was visited with the plagues of the Almighty, famine, fire, and earthquake.—‘ Have they not the inquisition in this country?’ I asked; I was answered they had.—‘ And do they make all this outcry about an earthquake?’ said I within myself, ‘ let them give God thanks and be quiet.’

“ Presently there came ships from England, loaded with all manner of goods for the relief of the inhabitants; the people took the bounty, were preserved, then turned and cursed their preservers for heretics.—‘ This is as it should be,’ said I, ‘ these men act up to their nature, and the

English are a nation of fools ; I will not go amongst them.'—After a short time, behold, a new city was rising on the ruins of the old one ! The people took the builders' tools, which the English had sent them, and made themselves houses : I overheard a fellow at his work say to his companion—' Before the earthquake I made my bed in the streets, now I shall have a house to live in.'—' This is too much,' said I ; ' their misfortunes make this people happy, and I will stay no longer in their country.'—I descended to the banks of the Tagus ; there was a ship, whose canvass was loosed for sailing.—' She is an English ship,' says a Galliego porter ; ' they are brave seamen, but damned tyrants on the quarter deck.'—' They pay well for what they have,' says a boatman, ' and I am going on board her with a cargo of lemons.'—I threw myself into the wherry, and entered the ship : the mariners were occupied with their work, and nobody questioned me why I was amongst them. The tide wafted us into the ocean, and the night became tempestuous, the vessel laboured in the sea, and the morning brought no respite to our toil.—' Whither are you bound ?' said I to the master.—' To hell,' said he, ' for nothing but the devil ever drove at such a rate !'—The fellow's voice was thunder ; the sailors sung in the storm, and the master's oaths were louder than the waves ; the third day was a dead calm, and he swore louder than ever.—' If the winds were of this man's making,' thought I, ' he would not be content with them.'—A favourable breeze sprung

up as if it had come at his calling.—‘ I thought it was coming,’ says he ; ‘ put her before the wind, it blows fair for our port.’—‘ But where is your port ?’ again I asked him.—‘ Sir,’ says he, ‘ I can now answer your question as I should do ; with God’s leave I am bound to Bordeaux ; every thing goes at sea as it pleases God.’ My heart sunk at the name of my native city. ‘ I was frightened,’ added he, ‘ from London with a cargo of goods of all sorts for the poor sufferers by the earthquake ; I shall load back with wine for my owners, and so help out a charitable voyage with some little profit, if it please God to bless our endeavours.’—‘ Heyday !’ thought I, ‘ how fair weather changes this fellow’s note !’—‘ Lewis,’ said he to a handsome youth, who stood at his elbow, ‘ we will now seek out this Monsieur Chaubert at Bordeaux, and get payment of his bills on your account.’—‘ Show me your bills,’ said I, ‘ for I am Chaubert.’—He produced them, and I saw my own name forged to bills in favour of the villain who had so treacherously dealt with me in the affair of the woman who was to have been my wife.—‘ Where is the wretch,’ said I, ‘ who drew these forgeries ?’—The youth burst into tears.—‘ He is my father,’ he replied, and turned away.—‘ Sir,’ says the master, ‘ I am not surprised to find this fellow a villain to you, for I was once a trader in affluence, and have been ruined by his means, and reduced to what you see me ; but I forgive what he has done to me ; I can earn a maintenance, and am as happy in my present hard employ, nay, happier than when

I was rich and idle ; but to defraud his own son proves him an unnatural rascal, and, if I had him here, I would hang him at the mizen yard.'

" When the English master declared he was happier in his present hard service than in his former prosperity, and that he forgave the villain who had ruined him, I started with astonishment, and stood out of his reach, expecting every moment when his phrensy would break out ; I looked him steadily in his face, and to my surprise saw no symptoms of madness there ; there was no wandering in his eyes, and content of mind was impressed upon his features.—' Are you in your senses ? ' I demanded, ' And can you forgive the villain ? '—' From my heart,' answered he, ' else how should I expect to be forgiven ? '—His words struck me dumb ; my heart tugged at my bosom ; the blood rushed to my face. He saw my situation, and turned aside to give some orders to the sailors ; after some minutes he resumed the conversation, and, advancing towards me, in his rough familiar manner, said—' It is my way, Mr. Chaubert, to forgive and forget, though to be sure the fellow deserves hanging for his treatment of this poor boy his son, who is as good a lad as ever lived, but as for father and mother'——' Who is his mother ? What was her name ? ' I eagerly demanded. Her name had no sooner passed his lips than I felt a shock through all my frame beyond that of electricity ; I staggered as if with a sudden stroke, and caught hold of the barricade ; an involuntary shriek burst from me, and I cried out,—' That woman—Oh ! that woman'——' Was a devil,' said the

master, 'and if you knew but half the misery you have escaped, you would fall down upon your knees, and thank God for the blessing: I have heard your story, Mr. Chaubert, and when a man is in love, do you see, he does not like to have his mistress taken from him; but some things are better lost than found, and if this is all you have to complain of, take my word for it, you complain of the luckiest hour in your whole life.' He would have proceeded, but I turned from him without uttering a word, and shutting myself into my cabin, surrendered myself to my meditations.

"My mind was now in such a tumult that I cannot recall my thoughts, much less put them into any order for relation. The ship however kept her course, and had now entered the mouth of the Garonne; I landed on the quay of Bordeaux; the master accompanied me, and young Lewis kept charge of the ship. The first object that met my view was a gibbet erected before the door of a merchant's counting house. The convict was kneeling on a scaffold; whilst a friar was receiving his last confession; his face was turned towards us; the Englishman glanced his eye upon him, and instantly cried out—'Look, look, Mr. Chaubert, the very man, as I am alive; it is the father of young Lewis.'—The wretch had discovered us in the same moment, and called aloud—'Oh Chaubert, Chaubert! let me speak to you before I die!'—His yell was horror to my soul; I lost the power of motion, and the crowd pushing towards the scaffold, thrust me forward to the very edge of it; the friar ordered silence, and demanded of the wretch why he had called

out so eagerly, and what he had farther to confess.

“ ‘Father,’ replied the convict, ‘this is the very man, the very Chaubert of whom I was speaking; he was the best of friends to me, and I repaid his kindness with the blackest treachery; I seduced the woman of his affections from him, I married her, and, because we dreaded his resentment, we conspired in an attempt upon his life by poison.’—He now turned to me, and proceeded as follows:—‘You may remember, Chaubert, as we were supping together on the very evening of Louisa’s elopement, she handed to you a glass of wine to drink to your approaching nuptials; as you were lifting it to your lips, your favourite spaniel leaped upon your arm, and dashed it on the floor; in a sudden transport of passion, which you were addicted to, you struck the creature with violence, and laid it dead at your feet. It was the saving moment of your life—the wine was poisoned, inevitable death was in the draught, and the animal you killed was God’s instrument for preserving you; reflect upon the event, subdue your passions, and practise resignation. Father, I have no more to confess! I die repentant. Let the executioner do his office.’ ”

CUMBERLAND.

JUPITER AND THE DESTINIES.

AMONG the various sets of correspondents who apply to me for advice, and send up their cases from all parts of Great Britain, there are none who are more importunate with me, and whom I am more inclined to answer, than the complainers. One of them dates his letter to me from the banks of a purling stream, where he used to ruminate in solitude on the divine *Clarissa*, and where he is now looking about for a convenient leap, which he tells me he is resolved to take, unless I support him under the loss of that charming perjured woman. Poor *Lavinia* presses as much for consolation on the other side, and is reduced to such an extremity of despair by the inconstancy of *Philander*, that she tells me she writes her letter with her pen in one hand, and her garter in the other. A gentleman of an ancient family in Norfolk is almost out of his wits upon the account of a greyhound, that, after having been his inseparable companion for ten years, is at last run mad. Another, who I believe is serious, complains to me, in a very moving manner, of a loss of a wife; and another, in terms still more moving, of a purse of money that was taken from him on *Bagshot Heath*; and which, he tells me, would not have troubled him if he had given it to the poor. In short, there is scarce a calamity in human life that has not produced me a letter.

It is indeed wonderful to consider how men

are able to raise afflictions to themselves out of every thing. Lands and houses, sheep and oxen, can convey happiness and misery into the hearts of reasonable creatures. Nay, I have known a muff, a scarf, a tippet, become a solid blessing or misfortune. A lapdog has broken the hearts of thousands. Flavia, who had buried five children and two husbands, was never able to get over the loss of her parrot. How often has a divine creature been thrown into a fit by a neglect at a ball or an assembly! Mopsa has kept her chamber ever since the last masquerade, and is in greater danger of her life upon being left out of it, than Clarissa from the violent cold which she caught at it. Nor are these dear creatures the only sufferers by such imaginary calamities. Many an author has been dejected at the censure of one whom he ever looked upon as an idiot; and many a hero cast into a fit of melancholy, because the rabble have not hooted at him as he passed through the streets. Theron places all his happiness in a running horse, Suffenus in a gilded chariot, Fulvius in a blue string, and Florio in a tulip root. It would be endless to enumerate the many fantastical afflictions that disturb mankind; but as a misery is not to be measured from the nature of the evil, but from the temper of the sufferer, I shall present my readers, who are unhappy either in reality or imagination, with an allegory, for which I am indebted to the great father and prince of poets.

As I was sitting after dinner in my elbow chair, I took up Homer, and dipped into that

famous speech of Achilles to Priam*, in which he tells him that Jupiter has by him two great vessels, the one filled with blessings, and the other with misfortunes; out of which he mingles a composition for every man that comes into the world. This passage so exceedingly pleased me, that, as I fell insensibly into my afternoon's slumber, it wrought my imagination into the following dream.

When Jupiter took into his hands the government of the world, the several parts of nature, with the presiding deities, did homage to him. One presented him with a mountain of winds, another with a magazine of hail, and a third with a pile of thunderbolts. The Stars offered up their influences; Ocean gave in his trident, Earth her fruits, and the Sun his seasons. Among the several deities who came to make their court on this occasion, the Destinies advanced with two great tuns carried before them; one of which they fixed on the right hand of Jupiter, as he sat on his throne, and the other on his left. The first was filled with all the blessings, and the other with all the calamities of human life. Jupiter, in the beginning of his reign, finding the

- * Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
The source of evil one, and one of good;
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
Blessings to these, to those distributes ill:
To most he mingles both: the wretch decreed
To taste the bad, unmix'd, is curs'd indeed;
Pursued by wrongs, by meagre famine driven,
He wanders, outcast both of earth and heaven.'

Pope's Hom. II. xiv. 363.

world much more innocent than it is in this iron age, poured very plentifully out of the tun that stood at his right hand; but as mankind degenerated, and became unworthy of his blessings, he set abroach the other vessel, that filled the world with pain and poverty, battles and distempers, jealousy and falsehood, intoxicating pleasures and untimely deaths.

He was at length so very much incensed at the great depravation of human nature, and the repeated provocations which he received from all parts of the earth, that, having resolved to destroy the whole species, except Deucalion and Pyrrha, he commanded the Destinies to gather up the blessings which he had thrown away upon the sons of men, and lay them up until the world should be inhabited by a more virtuous and deserving race of mortals.

The Three Sisters immediately repaired to the earth in search of the several blessings that had been scattered on it; but found the task which was enjoined them to be much more difficult than they imagined. The first places they resorted to, as the most likely to succeed in, were cities, palaces, and courts; but, instead of meeting with what they looked for here, they found nothing but envy, repining, uneasiness, and the like bitter ingredients of the left hand vessel: whereas, to their great surprise, they discovered content, cheerfulness, health, innocence, and other the most substantial blessings in life, in cottages, shades, and solitudes.

There was another circumstance no less unex-

pected than the former, and which gave them very great perplexity in the discharge of the trust which Jupiter had committed to them. They observed, that several blessings had degenerated into calamities, and that several calamities had improved into blessings, according as they fell into the possession of wise or foolish men. They often found power with so much insolence and impatience cleaving to it, that it became a misfortune to the person on whom it was conferred. Youth had often distempers growing about it, worse than the infirmities of old age. Wealth was often united to such a sordid avarice, as made it the most uncomfortable and painful kind of poverty. On the contrary, they often found pain made glorious by fortitude, poverty lost in content, deformity beautified with virtue. In a word, the blessings were often like good fruits planted in a bad soil, that by degrees fall off from their natural relish into tastes altogether insipid or unwholesome : and the calamities, like harsh fruits, cultivated in a good soil, and enriched by proper grafts and inoculations, until they swell with generous and delightful juices.

There was still a third circumstance that occasioned as great a surprise to the Three Sisters as either of the foregoing, when they discovered several blessings and calamities which had never been in either of the tuns that stood by the throne of Jupiter, and were nevertheless as great occasions of happiness or misery as any there. These were that spurious crop of blessings and cala-

mities which were never sown by the hand of the Deity, but grew of themselves out of the fancies and dispositions of human creatures. Such are dress, titles, place, equipage, false shame, and groundless fear, with the like vain imaginations that shoot up in trifling, weak, and irresolute minds.

The Destinies, finding themselves in so great a perplexity, concluded that it would be impossible for them to execute the commands that had been given to them, according to their first intention; for which reason they agreed to throw all the blessings and calamities together into one large vessel, and in that manner offer them up at the feet of Jupiter.

This was performed accordingly; the eldest Sister presenting herself before the vessel, and introducing it with an apology for what they had done.

"O Jupiter," says she, "we have gathered together all the good and evil, the comforts and distresses of human life, which we thus present before thee in one promiscuous heap. We beseech thee, that thou thyself wilt sort them out for the future, as in thy wisdom thou shalt think fit. For we acknowledge, that there is none beside thee that can judge what will occasion grief or joy in the heart of a human creature, and what will prove a blessing or a calamity to the person on whom it is bestowed."

ADDISON.

THE TRANSPORT.

THE great eye of day was wide open, and a joyful light filled air, heaven, and ocean. The marbled clouds lay motionless far and wide over the deep blue sky, and all memory of storm and hurricane had vanished from the magnificence of that immense calm. There was but a gentle fluctuation on the bosom of the deep, and the sea-birds floated steadily there, or dipped their wings for a moment in the wreathed foam, and again wheeled sportively away into the sunshine. One ship, only one single ship, was within the encircling horizon, and she had lain there as if at anchor since the morning light; for, although all her sails were set, scarcely a wandering breeze touched her canvass, and her flags hung dead on staff and at peak, or lifted themselves uncertainly up at intervals, and then sunk again into motionless repose. The crew paced not her deck, for they knew that no breeze would come till after meridian,—and it was the Sabbath day.

A small congregation were singing praises to God in that chapel which rested almost as quietly on the sea as the house of worship in which they had been used to pray then rested far off on a foundation of rock in a green valley of their forsaken Scotland. They were emigrants—nor hoped ever again to see the mists of their native mountains. But as they heard the voice of their psalm, each singer half forgot that it blended with the sound of the sea, and almost believed himself sitting in the kirk of his own beloved

parish. But hundreds of billowy leagues intervened between them and the little tinkling bell that was now tolling their happier friends to the quiet house of God.

And now an old gray headed man rose to pray, and held up his withered hand in fervent supplication for all around, whom, in good truth, he called his children—for three generations were with the patriarch in that tabernacle.

There in one group were husbands and wives standing together, in awe of Him who held the deep in the hollow of his hand,—there, youths and maidens, linked together by the feeling of the same destiny, some of them perhaps hoping, when they reached the shore, to lay their heads on one pillow,—there, children hand in hand, happy in the wonders of the ocean,—and there, mere infants smiling on the sunny deck, and unconscious of the meaning of hymn or prayer.

A low, confined, growling noise was heard struggling beneath the deck, and a sailor called with a loud voice, "Fire, fire,—the ship's on fire!" Holy words died on the prayer's tongue—the congregation fell asunder—and pale faces, wild eyes, groans, shrieks, and outcries rent the silence of the lonesome sea. No one for a while knew the other, as all were hurried as in a whirlwind up and down the ship. A dismal heat, all unlike the warmth of that beautiful sun, came stiflingly on every breath. Mothers, who in their first terror had shuddered but for themselves, now clasped their infants to their breasts, and lifted up their eyes to heaven. Bold brave men grew white as ashes, and hands, strengthened

by toil and storm, trembled like the aspen-leaf. "Gone—gone,—we are all gone!" was now the cry; yet no one knew whence that cry came; and men glared reproachfully on each other's countenances, and strove to keep down the audible beating of their own hearts. The desperate love of life drove them instinctively to their stations, and the water was poured, as by the strength of giants, down among the smouldering flames. But the devouring element roared up into the air; and deck, masts, sails, and shrouds, were one crackling and hissing sheet of fire.

"Let down the boat!" was now the yell of hoarse voices; and in an instant she was filled with life. Then there was frantic leaping into the sea; and all who were fast drowning moved convulsively towards that little ark. Some sunk down at once into oblivion—some grasped at nothing with their disappearing hands—some seized in vain unquenched pieces of the fiery wreck—some would fain have saved a friend almost in the last agonies; and some, strong in a savage despair, tore from them the clenched fingers that would have dragged them down, and forgot in fear both love and pity.

Enveloped in flames and smoke, yet insensible as a corpse to the burning, a frantic mother flung down her baby among the crew; and as it fell among the upward oars unharmed, she shrieked out a prayer of thanksgiving: "Go, husband, go; for I am content to die.—Oh! live—live—my husband, for our darling Willy's sake." But in the prime of life, and with his manly bosom full of health and hope, the husband looked but

for a moment till he saw his child was safe ; and then, taking his young wife in his arms, sat down beneath the burning fragments of the sail, with the rest that were resigned, never more to rise up till the sound of the last trumpet, when the faithful and afflicted shall be raised to breathe for ever empyrean air.

ANONYMOUS.

HAMET AND RASCHID.

WHOSOEVER shall look heedfully upon those who are eminent for their riches will not think their condition such as that he should hazard his quiet, and much less his virtue, to obtain it ; for all that great wealth generally gives above a moderate fortune is more room for the freaks of caprice, and more privilege for ignorance and vice, a quicker succession of flatteries, and a larger circle of voluptuousness.

There is one reason, seldom remarked, which makes riches less desirable. Too much wealth is very frequently the occasion of poverty. He whom the wantonness of abundance has once softened easily sinks into negligence of his affairs ; and he that thinks he can afford to be negligent is not far from being poor. He will soon be involved in perplexities which his inexperience will render insurmountable ; he will fly for help to those whose interest it is that he should be more distressed, and will be at last torn to pieces by the vultures that always hover over fortunes in decay.

When the plains of India were burned up by

a long continuance of drought, Hamet and Raschid, two neighbouring shepherds, faint with thirst, stood at the common boundary of their grounds, with their flocks and herds panting round them, and in extremity of distress prayed for water. On a sudden the air was becalmed, the birds ceased to chirp, and the flocks to bleat. They turned their eyes every way, and saw a being of mighty stature advancing through the valley, whom they knew upon his nearer approach to be the Genius of Distribution. In one hand he held the sheaves of plenty, and in the other the sabre of destruction. The shepherds stood trembling, and would have retired before him; but he called to them with a voice gentle as the breeze that plays in the evening among the spices of Sabæa:—"Fly not from your benefactor, children of the dust! I am come to offer you gifts, which only your own folly can make vain. You here pray for water, and water I will bestow; let me know with how much you will be satisfied: speak not rashly; consider that, of whatever can be enjoyed by the body, excess is no less dangerous than scarcity. When you remember the pain of thirst, do not forget the danger of suffocation. Now, Hamet, tell me your request."

"O being, kind and beneficent," says Hamet, "let thine eye pardon my confusion. I entreat a little brook, which in summer shall never be dry, and in winter never overflow."—"It is granted," replies the Genius; and immediately he opened the ground with his sabre, and a fountain bubbling up under their feet scattered its rills over the meadows; the flowers renewed

their fragrance, the trees spread a greener foliage, and the flocks and herds quenched their thirst.

Then turning to Raschid, the Genius invited him likewise to offer his petition. "I request," says Raschid, "that thou wilt turn the Ganges through my grounds, with all its waters, and all their inhabitants." Hamet was struck with the greatness of his neighbour's sentiments, and secretly pined in his heart that he had not made the same petition before him; when the Genius spoke, "Rash man, be not insatiable! remember to thee that is nothing which thou canst not use; and how are thy wants greater than the wants of Hamet?" Raschid repeated his desire, and pleased himself with the mean appearance that Hamet would make in the presence of the proprietor of the Ganges. The Genius then retired towards the river, and the two shepherds stood waiting the event. As Raschid was looking with contempt upon his neighbour, on a sudden was heard the roar of torrents, and they found by the mighty stream that the mounds of the Ganges were broken. The flood rolled forward into the lands of Raschid, his plantations were torn up, his flocks were overwhelmed, he was swept away before it, and a crocodile devoured him,

JOHNSON.

LIFE COMPARED TO A PLAY.

IF I was not quite sick of the number of stupid dreams which have been written in imitation of those excellent ones published in the Spectators, Tatlers, and some later periodical papers, I should

be exceedingly tempted to fall into some allegorical slumbers. After this declaration, I know not why I may not actually do it; since I see people, in a hundred other instances, seem to imagine that censuring any thing violently, is amply sufficient to excuse their being guilty of it.

Suppose me then composed in my easy chair, after having long meditated on that old and threadbare comparison of human life to a play. To this my imagination furnishes abundance of scenery; and the train of my thoughts goes on just as well, after my eyes are closed, as it did before.

As I have yet but a very inconsiderable part in the performance, I have leisure enough to stand between the scenes, and to amuse myself with various speculations. Fortunately for me, I am placed near a person who can give me sufficient information of the whole matter; since, indeed, this venerable person is no other than the originally intended directress of the theatre, Wisdom by name: but being of a temper above entering into all the little disputes of the actors, she has suffered her place to be usurped by a multitude of pretenders, who mix the vilest of farces, and the absurdest of tragedies with the noblest drama in the world.

These destructive interlopers were busily instructing all the actors, as they appeared upon the stage; and indeed one might easily see the effects of their teaching. Scarce one in fifty repeated a single line with a natural and unaffected air: every feature was distorted by gri-

mace, many a good sentiment *outrée*, by the emphasis with which it was pronounced.

"Would it not put one quite out of patience," said my neighbour, "to see that fellow there so entirely spoil one of the finest passages in the play, by turning it into a mere rant? Is there any bearing that man who, pretending to act the lover, puts on all the airs of a madman? Why, sir, do you think that graceful figure, that sense, and all those advantages you were dressed with, in order to do honour to my company, were given you, only that you might walk about the stage sighing and exclaiming? Pray let me cast an eye on your part.—Look ye, are here any of those soliloquies that you are every moment putting in?—Why, here is not a single word of misery, death, torment." The lover, awaking out of his reverie, pointed to a prompter that stood at a little distance, when Wisdom perceived it to be busy Imagination. She only, with an air of compassion, drew the poor youth to her side of the stage, and begged he would keep out of the hearing of so bad a director.

The next we happened to attend to was a young woman, of a most amiable figure, who stood pretty near us; but the good nature in her countenance was mixed with a kind of haughty disdain, whenever she turned towards Imagination, that did not absolutely please me. I remarked upon it to my friend, and we jointly observed her stealing leisure from her part to look over the whole scheme of the drama. "That actress," says she, "has a most charming genius, but she too has a *travers* in it. Because she has

seen some love scenes in the play ridiculously acted, and heard them censured by those whose judgments she respects, and especially because she is very justly displeased with all the bombast stuff Imagination puts into them : she will, against her senses, believe there is scarce a single line about it in the whole drama : and there you may see her striking out for spurious passages that have warmed the noblest hearts with generous sentiments, and gained a just applause from Socrates and Plato themselves, two of the finest actors I ever had. This is, however, an error on the right side. Happy for you, young actress, if you never fall into a worse ! She may indeed miss saying an agreeable thing, but she will never say an absurd one.

“ Look yonder, and you will see more dangerous and more ridiculous mistakes. That group of young actors, just entering on the stage, who cannot possibly have beheld more than half a scene, pretend already, in a decisive way, to give their judgment of the whole ; they do not so much as wait for their cue (which years and discretion ought to give them), but thrust forward into the middle of the action. Some of them, displeased with the decorations of their part of the theatre, are busied in hurrying the tinsel ornaments from the other corners of it, where they were much more becomingly placed. That man yonder, who ought to be acting the part of a hero, is so taken up with adjusting his dress, that he never once seems to think of the green room, where all these robes must soon be laid aside.

“Look yonder, look yonder! This is a piti-able sight indeed. Behold that woman, exquisitely handsome still, though much past the bloom of youth, and formed to shine in any part; but so unhappily attached to that she has just left, that her head is absolutely turned behind her; so unwilling is she to lose sight of her beloved gaieties.

“In another place you may see persons, who, sensible that the splendid dresses of the theatre are only lent them for a time, disdain, with a sullen ill judged pride, to put them on at all, and so disgrace the parts that were allotted them for their own advantage.

“Alas! what a different prompter has that actor got! He was designed to represent a character of generosity, and, for that purpose, furnished with a large treasure of counters, which it was his business to dispose of in the most graceful manner to those actors engaged in the same scene with him. Instead of this, that old fellow, Interest, who stands at his elbow, has prompted him to put the whole bag into his pocket, as if the counters themselves were of real value; whereas, the moment he sets his foot off the stage, or is hurried down through some of those trap doors that are every moment opening round him, these tinsel pieces are no longer current. To conceal, in some measure, the falseness of this behaviour, he is forced to leave out a hundred fine passages, intended to grace his character, and to occasion unnumbered chasms and inconsistencies, which not only make him hissed, but the very scheme of the drama murmured at.

Yet still he persists; and see! just now, when he ought to be gracefully treading the stage with a superior air, he is stooping down to pick up some more counters that happen to be fallen upon the dirty floor, made dirty on purpose for the disgrace of those who choose to grovel there.

“You can scarcely have an idea,” added my instructress, “how infinitely the harmony of the whole piece is interrupted by the misuse which these wrong headed actors make of its mere decorations. The part you have to act, child, is a very small one; but, remember, it is infinitely superior to every such attachment. Fix your attention upon its meaning, not its ornaments: let your manner be just and unaffected; your air cheerful and disengaged: never pretend to look beyond the present page: and, above all, trust the great Author of the Drama with his own glorious work; and never think to mend what is above your understanding, by minute criticisms that are below it.”

MISS TALBOT.

HAPPINESS:

An Allegory.

JUPITER, when he made man, brought with him from heaven a nymph called Felicia, or Happiness, to be his companion. The better to engage them to each other, he furnished man with those passions and affections which were to feed the mind with perpetual wishes, with a guide, called Reason, to restrain their violence; and to the

nymph he gave immortal beauty, together with a certain degree of coyness, which is always sure to engage pursuit and endear possession.

But as if some other power had a malicious design to set this pair at variance, notwithstanding the seeming desire of Jupiter to unite them. Felicia became insensible to every thing but virtue, while the passions of man generally hurried him to a pursuit of her by the means of vice. With this difference in their natures, it was impossible for them to agree; and in a short time they became almost strangers to each other. Reason would have gone over to the side of Felicia, but some particular passion always opposed him; for, what was almost incredible, though Reason was a sufficient match for the whole body of Passions united, he was sure to be subdued, if singly encountered.

Jupiter laughed at the folly of man, and gave him woman. But as her frame was too delicately composed to endure the perpetual strife of Reason and the Passions, he confined the former to man, and gave up woman to the government of the latter without control.

Felicia, upon this new creation, grew again acquainted with man. She made him a visit of a month, and, at his entreaty, would have settled with him for ever, if the jealousy of woman had not driven her from his roof.

From this time the nymph has led a wandering life, without any settled habitation. As the world grew peopled, she paid her visits to every corner of it; but though millions pretended to love her, not a single mortal had constancy to

deserve her. Ceremony drove her from court, Avarice from the city, and Want from the cottage. Her delight, however, was in the last of these places, and there it was that she was most frequently to be found.

Jupiter saw with pity the wanderings of Felicia, and in a fortunate hour caused a mortal to be born, whose name was Bonario, or Goodness. He endowed him with all the graces of mind and body; and at an age when the soul becomes sensible of desires, he breathed into him a passion for the beautiful Felicia. Bonario had frequently seen her in his early visits to Wisdom and Devotion; but as lightness of belief, and an overfondness of mankind were failings inseparable to him, he often suffered himself to be led astray from Felicia, till Reflection, the common friend of both, would set him right, and reconduct him to her company.

Though Felicia was a virgin of some thousand years old, her coyness was rather found to increase than to diminish. This, perhaps, to mortal old maids may be matter of wonder; but the true reason was, that the beauty of Felicia was incapable of decay. From hence it was that the fickleness of Bonario made her less and less easy of access. Yet such was his frailty, that he continually suffered himself to be enticed from her, till at last she totally withdrew herself. Reflection came now only to upbraid him. Her words, however, were of service, as by showing how he had lost Felicia, they gave him hopes that a contrary behaviour might, in time, regain her.

The loss of happiness instructs us how to value

it. And now it was that Bonario began in earnest to love Felicia, and to devote his whole time to a pursuit of her. He inquired for her among the great, but they knew her not. He bribed the poor for intelligence, but they were strangers to her. He sought her of Knowledge, but she was ignorant of her; of Pleasure, but she misled him. Temperance knew only the path she had taken; Virtue had seen her upon the way; but Religion assured him of her retreat, and sent Constancy to conduct him to her.

It was in a village far from town that Bonario again saw his Felicia; and here was in hopes of possessing her for ever. The coyness with which she treated him in his days of folly, time and the amendment it had wrought in him began to soften. He passed whole days in her society, and was rarely denied access to her but when Passion had misguided him.

Felicia lived in this retreat, with the daughter of a simple villager called Innocence. To this amiable rustic did Bonario apply for intercession upon every new offence against Felicia; but too impatient of delay, and out of humour with his advocate, he renewed his acquaintance with a court lady, called Vice, who was there upon a visit, and engaged her to solicit for him. This behaviour so enraged Felicia, that she again withdrew herself; and, in the warmth of her resentment, sent up a petition to Jupiter, to be recalled to heaven.

Jupiter, upon this petition, called a council of the gods; in which it was decreed, that while Bonario continued upon earth, Felicia should not

totally depart from it; but as the nature of Bonario was fickle and imperfect, his admission to her society should be only occasional and transient. That their nuptials should be deferred till the nature of Bonario should be changed by death; and that afterwards they should be inseparably united in the regions of immortality.

E. MOORE.

THE ENCHANTED GLASSES.

I REMEMBER a friend of mine had once an excellent conceit of a cave, at the upper end of which were two enchanted glasses, with curtains drawn before them, that were to be consulted every evening in order for the forming a judgment of the actions of the day. The first glass showed what they *might* have been, and what effects such and such opportunities ought to have produced: when the curtain was undrawn before the other, it showed *tout au naturel* what they *had* been. Were one to contemplate in these glasses, on the spending one of those great estates, which reduce our fine people to such difficulties, what a *coup d'œil* the first would present! A wide tract of country adorned and improved; a thousand honest families flourishing on their well cultivated farms; I cannot tell whether one should not see a church or two rising in a plain sort of majesty amidst the landscape: in another part of it would appear manufactures encouraged, poverty relieved, and multitudes of people praying for the welfare of the happy master: his

tradesmen, his domestics, every body that has any connexion with him, would appear with a cheerful and a grateful air: they, in their turns, would dispense good and happiness to all with whom they had any concern. At the family seat would be seen an unassuming grandeur, and an honest hospitality, free from profuseness and intemperance. One may say, as of Hamlet's two pictures,

Such should be greatness :—Now, behold what follows :
For here is Fortune, like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting each wholesome grain.

In the true historical glass what may we see? Perhaps a pack of hounds, a cellar, an election; perhaps a gaming-table, with all those hellish faces that surround it; an artful director, perhaps, and an indolent pupil. Oppression gripes every poor wretch within its grasp, and these again oppress their own inferiors and dependents: all look hopeless and joyless, and every look seems to conceal a secret murmur. On the foreground, perhaps, there stands a magnificent palace, in the Italian taste; innumerable temples, obelisks, and statues, rise among the woods; and never were Flora and Pomona, Venus and Diana, more expensively honoured in Greece and Rome, than in these fairy scenes. The church, in the mean time, stands with a wooden tower, the fields are poorly cultivated, the neighbourhood discontented, and ever upon the catch to find all possible faults in those proud great ones, with whom they have no cheerful friendly inter-

course. Fine clothes and costly jewels glitter, perhaps, in some part of the glass; but how can they adorn faces grown wan with inward care, or give gracefulness to those who must always have the air of inferiority when they happen to meet the eye of their unpaid tradesmen, whose families are starving on their account?

MISS TALBOT.

TRUTH NOT TO BE TOLD AT ALL TIMES ;

OR,

THE MORAL ENCHANTER.

IN those days when magicians were rife on earth, doubtless very delightful times, for even now the mere relation of the wonders which were then common retains a spell, and a potent charm against the ennui of a long winter's evening,—in those days there lived an enchanter, who must himself have been bewitched, being possessed not only of the wish of curing, but by the hope of being able to cure mankind of their foibles, vanities, and follies, by means of the resources of his art. Many were the astonishing proofs which he is reported to have given of his skill; some of them, indeed, so astonishing as to be incredible even to those who are not startled at the utmost licentiousness of fiction, or all the wonders of fairy land. One instance of what he is said to have thus effected will convince the reader that his repute was not greater than it merited to be. Almaforatati—for such was the

imposingly sonorous name of our philosophic magician—almost endued of itself with necromantic power—had discovered that the female tongue generally acquires an additional and very formidable impetus after marriage; and that the musical tones of a maiden's voice frequently become shrill and discordant from the same cause: in short, he discovered that another magician, of a very capricious temper, and named Gegamos, took a malignant pleasure in frequently transforming the most beautiful nymphs, angels, and goddesses, into shrews and scolds; a more lamentable metamorphosis than any recorded in that delightful romance, written by the Ariosto of antiquity*. Against these most diabolical transformations, the benevolent Almaforatati contrived a potent talisman; but, unfortunately for posterity, the secret of this talisman was confided to a woman; and, therefore, as the sex are as little celebrated for their retention of secrets, as they are for their retention of tongue, I presume that it has long since been lost. Reader, art thou married? Should such happen to be the case, thou wilt appreciate the benevolence of Almaforatati as it deserves.—It is not my intention, however, to record all that this humane enchanter did for the improvement and amelioration of mankind; since, excellent as he was, and excellent as his history could not fail to be when written by myself, it might be somewhat prolix—I will not employ that ominous word *tedious*. For the present, therefore, I shall confine myself to the relation of one of those many cures which he

• Ovid.

effected by the judicious employment of his necromantic skill.

There was, among others, whom he attempted to bring to reason a certain Biribissi : this person was afflicted with a most inconvenient and ugly disorder, which was a perpetual source of embarrassment to himself and others ; for the poor man was determined, on every occasion, to *speak his mind*, and to manifest by his actions his thorough contempt for what he termed the sophisticated and artificial forms of society. This he frequently did, to the utter disregard of the feelings of every one else. Almaforatati considered him, therefore, as a very fit object of compassion ; and resolved to remove, if possible, so desperate a folly : and what can be more egregiously so, than an undisguised exposure of one's sentiments on every occasion, and that too in the most wanton and gratuitous manner. In order to accomplish this laudable purpose, Almaforatati transported Biribissi to an enchanted domain ; where, upon his arrival, he proceeded towards a spacious edifice, on which was an inscription, purporting that it was the " Palace of unsophisticated Sincerity ;" and that, within its walls, no restriction was imposed upon either words or actions. Biribissi was enraptured at this discovery, and immediately entered, hoping to be able, for once, not only to speak truth himself, without offending others, but likewise to hear it from them. After passing through many noble and magnificent halls, where there was no one either to receive or welcome him, he found himself in a splendid saloon, filled with a numerous company.

The din and confusion which prevailed here tended, in some degree, to dispel the pleasure he had experienced in contemplating the splendour of the other apartments, and in anticipating the enjoyment arising from a complete rejection of those eternal insincerities which are a stain upon social intercourse. Having entered, he found that each individual was acting with as little restraint as if he were completely alone. Some were gesticulating before the large mirrors that adorned the walls, and throwing themselves into strange attitudes, and each expressed aloud his unqualified admiration of his own person. Others, who held manuscripts in their hands, were extolling the beauties of their own composition, and appeared to be lost in ecstasy at the contemplation of their own genius. Some were dancing, but all singly; some singing; others talking aloud to themselves, and expressing, very unreservedly, their opinions of the rest of the company: every one, in short, was manifesting his perfect disregard of all form or restraint.

At first, Biribissi was delighted at what he considered to be liberty, ingenuousness, candour, and a love of veracity; in a short time, however, he was disgusted at their extravagance, particularly as they did not scruple to make certain observations on his person, which, notwithstanding his enthusiasm for sincerity, he could very well have spared; the more so, as his features and countenance were not altogether formed to call forth expressions of admiration. So irritated, indeed, did he at length become, in consequence of some comments on his figure, very candidly offered to him, that he aimed a blow at the com-

mentator himself, for the purpose of convincing him, not logically, but manually, of the exceeding bad taste of his critique, and how little it was relished. But, lo! no sooner had he struck him, than the whole scene vanished, and he found himself in the presence of Almaforatati, who expressed his admiration of his vehemence, by a countenance not of the sternest cast for a magician. "Biribissi," exclaimed he, "you appear to be somewhat disturbed. How! has any thing occurred within the Palace of Sincerity, that could possibly excite your displeasure?" But the astonished, the indignant, the abashed Biribissi replied not. "Well," continued Almaforatati, "unless all my science has forsaken me, I may venture to predict that, henceforward your unqualified admiration of unqualified sincerity will be considerably diminished—will be less fervent, less romantic. The lesson you have just received, and the scene you have just been witnessing, must convince you that the forms against which you exclaim as being incompatible with liberty, as abridging, and they undoubtedly do abridge, the freedom of each individual, are precisely that which preserves social intercourse, and polishes down its asperities, rendering it less harsh, and less likely to wound the tenderness of self-love. The insincerity which you so much decry, is but that decent veil, without which truth itself disgusts; while the candour you have hitherto affected to admire, is but too often a mere disguise, beneath which may be detected obstinacy, rudeness, and selfishness."

ANONYMOUS.

HACHO, KING OF LAPLAND;

OR,

THE DANGER OF LUXURY.

HACHO, a king of Lapland, was in his youth the most renowned of the northern warriors. His martial achievements remain engraved on a pillar of flint in the rocks of Hanga, and are to this day solemnly carolled to the harp by the Laplanders, at the fires with which they celebrate their nightly festivities. Such was his intrepid spirit that he ventured to pass the lake Vether to the Isle of Wizards, where he descended alone into the dreary vault, in which a magician had been kept bound for six ages, and read the Gothic characters inscribed on his brazen mace. His eye was so piercing, that, as ancient chronicles report, he could blunt the weapons of his enemies by only looking at them. At twelve years of age he carried an iron vessel of prodigious weight, for the length of five furlongs, in the presence of all the chiefs of his father's castle.

Nor was he less celebrated for his prudence and wisdom. Two of his proverbs are yet remembered and repeated among the Laplanders. To express the vigilance of the Supreme Being, he was wont to say, "Odin's belt is always buckled." To show that the most prosperous condition of life is often hazardous, his lesson was, "When you slide on the smoothest ice, beware of pits beneath." He consoled his countrymen, when they were once preparing to leave the frozen

deserts of Lapland, and resolved to seek some warmer climate, by telling them that the Eastern nations, notwithstanding their boasted fertility, passed every night amidst the horrors of anxious apprehension, and were inexpressibly affrighted and almost stunned, every morning, with the noise of the sun while he was rising.

His temperance and severity of manners were his chief praise. In his early years he never tasted wine; nor would he drink out of a painted cup. He constantly slept in his armour, with his spear in his hand; nor would he use a battle-axe whose handle was inlaid with brass. He did not, however, persevere in this contempt of luxury; nor did he close his days with honour.

One evening, after hunting the gubor, or wild dog, being bewildered in a solitary forest, and having passed the fatigues of the day without any interval of refreshment, he discovered a large store of honey in the hollow of a pine. This was a dainty which he had never tasted before; and being at once faint and hungry, he fell greedily upon it. From this unusual and delicious repast he received so much satisfaction, that, at his return home, he commanded honey to be served up at his table every day. His palate, by degrees, became refined and vitiated; he began to lose his native relish for simple fare; and contracted a habit of indulging himself in delicacies; he ordered the delightful gardens of his castle to be thrown open, in which the most luscious fruits had been suffered to ripen and decay, unobserved and untouched, for many revolving autumns, and gratified his appetite with luxurious desserts. At

length he found it expedient to introduce wine, as an agreeable improvement, or a necessary ingredient to his new way of living; and having once tasted it, he was tempted by little and little to give a loose to the excesses of intoxication. His general simplicity of life was changed; he perfumed his apartments by burning the wood of the most aromatic fir, and commanded his helmet to be ornamented with beautiful rows of the teeth of the reindeer. Indolence and effeminacy stole upon him by pleasing and imperceptible gradations, relaxed the sinews of his resolution, and extinguished his thirst of military glory.

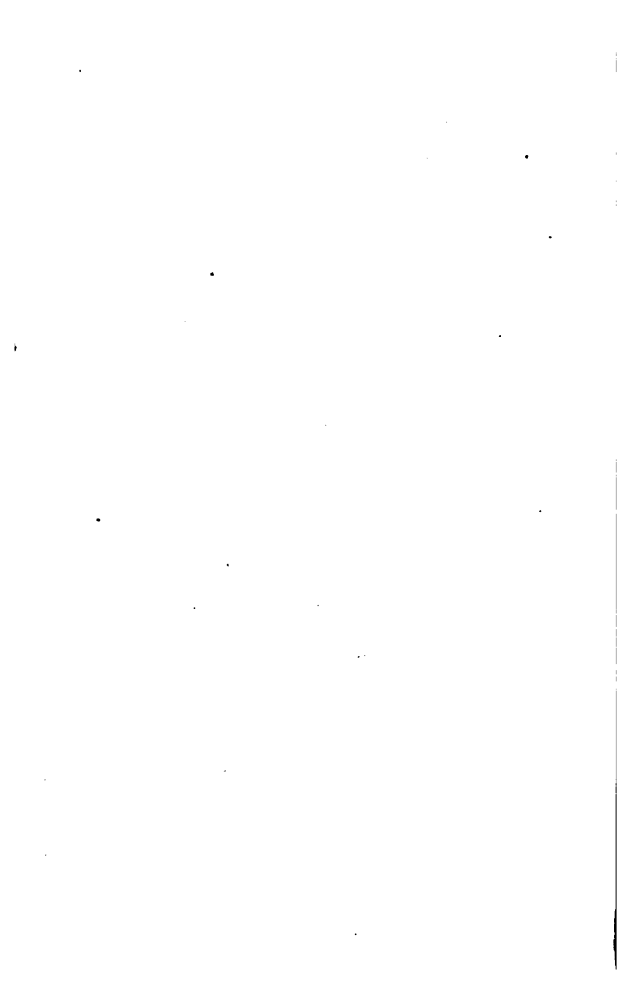
While Hacho was thus immersed in pleasure and in repose, it was reported to him, one morning, that the preceding night a disastrous omen had been discovered, and that bats and hideous birds had drunk up the oil which nourished the perpetual lamp in the temple of Odin. About the same time a messenger arrived to tell him that the king of Norway had invaded his kingdom with a formidable army. Hacho, terrified as he was with the omen of the night, and enervated with indulgence, roused himself from his lethargy, and, recollecting some faint and few sparks of veteran valour, marched forward to meet him. Both armies joined battle in the forest where Hacho had been lost after hunting; and it so happened, that the king of Norway challenged him to single combat, near the place where he had tasted the honey. The Lapland chief, languid and long disused to arms, was soon overpowered; he fell to the ground; and, before his insulting adversary struck his head

from his body, uttered this exclamation, which the Laplanders still use as an early lesson to their children :—" The vicious man should date his destruction from the first temptation. How justly do I fall a sacrifice to sloth and luxury, in the place where I first yielded to those allurements which first seduced me to deviate from temperance and innocence! The honey which I tasted in this forest, and not the hand of the king of Norway, conquers Hacho." T. WARTON.

END OF VOL. I.

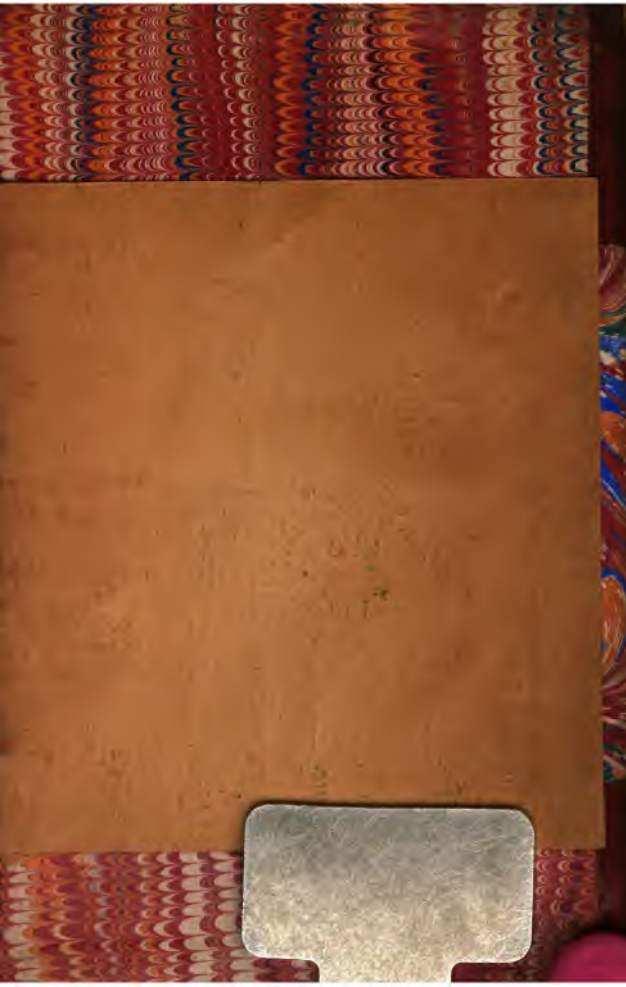
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